

Professor Blunt still in Britain, friend confirms

Professor Anthony Blunt, the London flat until yesterday morning, although his lawyer had not left Britain, a close friend told yesterday. He stayed in his in the Commons.

Spy 'feels bound by secrets Act'

Edward Tessler and Bradley. Professor Anthony Blunt, the royal art adviser named the "fourth man" in the spy affair, has not left Britain, a close friend told yesterday. He stayed in his in the Commons.

Government plans further cash squeeze on local authorities and state industries

Another round of public spending cuts on the way

By Our Economics Staff. A new round of public spending cuts which will lead to an actual fall in the overall level of public spending next year, is on the way. This contrasts with the Government's plans to stabilize its spending in real terms, as set out in the White Paper on Public Expenditure published just two weeks ago.

The cash limits announced yesterday were brought forward from their usual publication date around the time of the Budget in a deliberate attempt to influence wage settlements in local authorities and nationalized industries.

Opposition mount pressure to curtail information Bill scope

George Clark, Political Correspondent. The Government's protection of information Bill should be withdrawn in the light of the revelations about the spy case, says Margaret Thatcher's spokesman Professor Anthony Blunt, Mr David Steel, the Liberal leader, said last night.



An angry Dr Kissinger confronts his critics over Cambodia.

Accusations infuriate Dr Kissinger

By Fred Emery, Political Editor. An incensed and bitterly defensive Dr Henry Kissinger, for once lacking his old composure and sense of self-deprecation, tried in London yesterday to rescue his reputation from the Cambodia horror.

Rate support grant pegged at 13% inflation level

By Christopher Warrman, Local Government Correspondent. The Government yesterday fixed the rate support grant at a level relevant to pay and price inflation of 13 per cent.

Mortgage rate likely to reach 15pc

Mortgage interest payments are expected to rise to a record rate of 15 per cent after the increase in minimum lending rate and the Government's decision to introduce more attractive National Savings rates.

Ex-Emperor Bokassa says he is 'broke'

Mr Jean Bokassa, deposed Emperor of the Central African Empire, was quoted by a Paris newspaper as saying he was broke and bitterly regretted the sale of his castle in France to a French businessman.

On other pages

- Letters: On Professor Anthony Blunt, from Mr Brian Sewell, and others; on interest rates, from Mr Geoffrey Rippon, QC, MP; on the spy case, from the Reverend Michael Seward and Mr John Osborne.
- Leading articles: American presidential election; rate support grant.
- Features: 7-14. Philippa Fawcett talks to Norman Mailer; Edmund Attenborough gets back into the cross-word habit.
- Obituaries: page 16. Dr Alphonse A. Barb, Dr R. W. Hunt.
- Sport: pages 17, 18. Football: Tony Woodcock signs for Cologne and George Best for Hibernian; Golf: Putting problems in Australian Open; Tennis: Lesson for British pair in doubles.
- Business News: pages 20-25.
- Stock markets: The new £1,000m tranche of long-dated tap stock was ten times oversubscribed and in hectic dealings the new stock and other long dated securities gains. Share rose even though a new short tap was announced after hours. Equities were quiet but firm. The FT index edged forward 0.7 to 407.0.
- Personal investment and finance: Why small investors must review their strategy; House prices; Insurance; Income bonds; This week in the stock market.
- Home News: 2, 4. Parliament 19. European News 5. Pensions 10. 19. Records 10. 19. Sale Rooms 16. 19. Appointments 16. 19. Science 16. 19. Services 16. 19. Shopping 25. 19. Sport 16. 19. TV & Radio 16. 19. Theatres, etc 16. 19. Travel 12. 19. 25 Years Ago 12. 19. Universities 12. 19. Weather 12. 19. Wills 16. 19.

Difficult negotiations ahead on Rhodesian ceasefire

By David Spenser, Diplomatic Correspondent. Sharp comments from General Peter Walls, commander of the Rhodesian defence forces, and the spokesman of the Patriotic Front, suggested yesterday that coming negotiations on a ceasefire may prove as difficult as anything that has gone before at the Lancaster House talks.

SCHOOL FEES AHEAD?

Through the Save & Prosper School Fees Capital Plan you can significantly reduce the cost of school fees by means of a lump-sum contribution of £1,000 or more. The Plan, which is particularly attractive to higher-rate taxpayers, provides payments each term while the child is at the fee-paying school. As you can see from the table below, the earlier the Plan is taken out the greater will be the saving.

Examples: Sum required to secure school fee payments for five years, starting at £1,000 for the first year and increasing annually thereafter by 7% p.a. compound.			
No. of complete years before schooling begins	Total fees secured	Capital outlay	Amount saved
1	£5,751	£4,410	£1,341
5	£2,909	£2,782	£1,127
7	£2,407	£2,344	£1,063
10	£1,779	£1,573	£1,206
13	£1,277	£1,474	£1,277

Rates effective from 12th November 1979

Exchanging shares for a School Fees Capital Plan

If you hold shares you can exchange them for a School Fees Capital Plan through our Share Exchange Plan, often on advantageous terms. Where we can accept your shares as part of one of our portfolios we will give you the stock market offer price for them - usually 2% - 3% higher than you would get by selling them yourself.

Tehran on the march

Tens of thousands of Iranians more ardent than ever in their support of the occupation of the American Embassy, marched through Tehran in the biggest demonstration of its kind so far. In New York a decision on whether the Shah may return to Mexico after radiation treatment may be taken next week.

Immigrant test case

A test case is to be filed by two groups of immigrants to see whether the London borough of Hillingdon has a duty to house them under the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act.

Mayers accuse Israel

Two of the Arab mayors who have resigned on the West Bank accused the Israelis of bringing trumped-up charges against them in an attempt to silence their opposition to the plan for Palestinian autonomy now being negotiated by Israel and Egypt.

'Watchdog' wrangle

MPs yesterday blocked motions to set up the new 'watchdog' select committees on departmental affairs, because of wrangle over committee membership. Some members believe an attempt has been made to keep 'troublesome' MPs off particular committees, though that has been denied.

Language barrier: Vietnamese refugees

are urgently in need of more English language training, according to voluntary organizations.

Vandalism: Police and councillors in South Wales

are to ask the public for help as vandalism worsens.

Moscow: One of the Soviet Union's top

conductors has applied to emigrate.

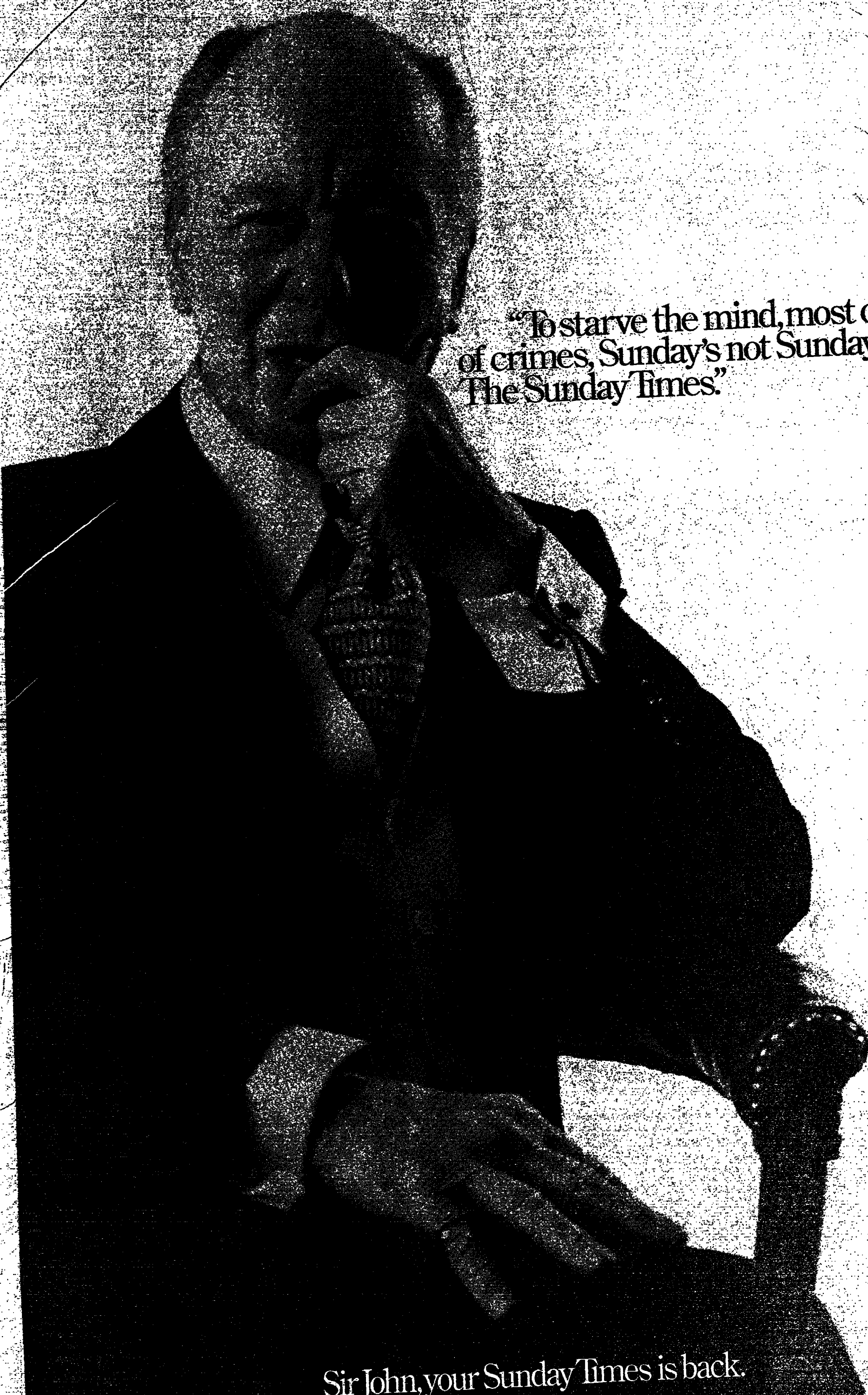
Warsaw date: Mrs Thatcher is being pressed by party colleagues to visit Poland.

John 1.50

THE TIMES SATURDAY NOVEMBER 17 1979

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VIPs big
setting a
watch
comm



"To starve the mind, most odious
of crimes, Sunday's not Sunday sans
The Sunday Times."

Sir John, your Sunday Times is back.

HOME NEWS

Controversial report on smallpox outbreak at university awaiting publication decision by ministry

From Arthur Osman
Birmingham

The Department of Health said yesterday that no date had been fixed for publishing the controversial report by Professor R. A. Shooter into the smallpox outbreak at Birmingham University last year.

Earlier this month Birmingham magistrates in effect rejected many of the report's conclusions, finding that the university had not failed to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of its employees in the medical school.

Professor Shooter, Professor of Medical Microbiology at London University and Dean of the medical college of St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, headed the government inquiry into the outbreak, which led to the death of Mrs Janet Parker, who had worked in a department above the smallpox laboratory. Professor Henry Bedson, virologist in charge of the laboratory, later killed himself.

The Department of Health said the report was being con-

sidered with a view to publication, but no date had been fixed.

The magistrates who dismissed the charge against the university heard two expert witnesses, one for the prosecution and the other for the defence, who both said the smallpox laboratory had been "clean".

A piece of evidence omitted from the Shooter report involved radioactivity tests. Mr Reginald Farr, head of medical physics at Queen Elizabeth Medical Centre, Birmingham, was commissioned by the inquiry to test for radioactivity with instruments capable of detecting one ten millionth of a microcurie per centimetre.

The reason for his involvement was that viruses in the laboratory were labelled with radioactive substances, and it was thought they would reveal any trace of escaped virus. But after exhaustive tests Mr Farr's report was negative and did not appear in the final inquiry report.

The inquiry favoured the theory that Mrs Parker was infected by airborne smallpox that probably escaped through a service duct as a result of bad laboratory practices. But four

expert witnesses, two from either side, said that airborne infection was not a possibility.

Dr Robert Harris, a microbiologist who was a witness for the prosecution said: "No one can be infected unless by contact with the virus". How Mrs Parker came into contact with it would probably never be known.

Dr Allan Downie, FRS, Emeritus Professor of Bacteriology at Liverpool University, told the court of experts at a smallpox hospital over a period of years. He used air sampling equipment designed at Porton Down. He tested for airborne infection but never succeeded in finding any trace of virus except when a sample was taken within 10 inches of a patient's mouth.

Samples moved: Samples of smallpox virus stored at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, London, for the past two years were moved yesterday under strict security to the Centre for Applied Microbiology and Research at Porton Down (the Press Association reports).

The operation, which took just under three hours, came after two weeks of careful preparation at the hospital and Porton Down.

Race body to inquire into borough housing rule

By Peter Evans
Home Affairs Correspondent

The Commission for Racial Equality is planning to investigate the housing policy of the London borough of Hillingdon. A test case is also to be brought by two sets of immigrants to see whether the council has a duty to them under the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977.

A year ago Mr Terry Dicks, chairman of Hillingdon's housing committee, turned an immigrant family over to the Foreign Office for its responsibility. Hillingdon had given them temporary accommodation for the night.

At that time Mr Dicks said he had given temporary accommodation to 14 families, including the one sent by taxi to the Foreign Office. He was quoted as saying: "Seven of these were whites. Seven were non-whites. So you see I am not a racist."

Mr Nicholas Rainsford, director of London Housing Aid Centre, told me yesterday it had dealt with the family, a widow, Mohamed Jaffer Jan Mohamed, and his four children, after they had been turned away.

Hillingdon has reviewed its obligations to house applicants arriving in Britain through immigration and who claim to be homeless.

The council told an applicant who had come from Cyprus with his wife and three children that as he had never had a local connection with the borough, it was not its duty to house him. In Great Britain, the council owed no duty to him under the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act.

The council takes the view that even if the Act did apply, then he cannot be considered homeless because he has accommodation in Cyprus, which he deliberately left to emigrate.

The other case involves a woman with a child who applied to the council for housing shortly after she arrived from Greece. The council has told her also that it owes her no duty under the Act.

The reasons are similar to those in the first case, and "further, the fact that the applicant, a foreign national, is not entitled to remain permanently in Great Britain, her permission to stay being only for six months."

Both applicants are legally represented and Hillingdon Council understands that proceedings will soon begin challenging its decision.

Mr John Watts, leader of the Conservative-controlled council, told me last night: "I do not believe that Parliament could possibly have intended that the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act to apply to anyone in the world arriving at Heathrow, although on some interpretations it is claimed that it does. The only satisfactory way is to test it in court."

The result would then apply to every housing authority in Great Britain. If the court upheld the contention of the immigrants, the council would have to offer accommodation to people in that category.

Hillingdon has an arrangement with the Greater London Council for the provision of property for permanent housing for people arriving from Heathrow who are accepted for it.

Housewives jailed for frauds over benefit

From Our Correspondent
Huddersfield

Two Halifax housewives who between them were said to have defrauded the Department of Health and Social Security of more than £12,000 by pretending that they had been deserted by their husbands were jailed by Mr Robert Taylor, the recorder, at Huddersfield Crown Court, West Yorkshire, yesterday.

The court was told that Mrs Norma Cullen, aged 44, a married woman with five children, of Stanningley Avenue, Mixenden, Halifax, had been paid £10,620 she was not entitled to in supplementary benefits over nine years. She was jailed for 18 months after admitting 10 offences of obtaining property by deception, and asked for 469 other offences to be considered.

Mr Gavin Barr-Young, for the prosecution, said: "This is

believed to be one of the biggest social security frauds in the country."

Grace Robinson, aged 36, a sales assistant and mother of two children, of Godley Gardens, Stump Cross, Halifax, was jailed for nine months after admitting five offences of obtaining property by deception. She asked for 92 other offences to be considered. The court was told that over nearly two years she got £2,172 in supplementary benefits to which she was not entitled.

Mr Taylor said that he had to pass prison sentences as a deterrent to others. As a result of those cases there might well be a change of procedure to benefits obtained by deception going on for such long periods.

After the case a department official said: "We realize that there have been weaknesses in the system and these have been recognized. We are introducing new steps as safeguards."

Plan to sell council estate likely to fuel controversy

By John Young
Planning Reporter

The controversy over the sale of council housing, on which the Labour Party is to hold a special conference next week, is sure to be intensified by the decision of the Borough Councils Housing Committee, in Wandsworth, London, to sell a complete estate of nearly 300 flats.

Subject to ratification by the Conservative-controlled council, the five blocks on the pre-war St John's estate, Battersea, will be offered to open-market tenants. Mr Peter Atkinson, the committee's deputy chairman, said members were prepared to see the buildings renovated or demolished and replaced, but

he thought complete demolition was unlikely.

The proposed sale differed from that in Liverpool last year of three badly vandalized tower blocks nicknamed the "Figures" because in that case the council had been concerned only to rid itself of buildings that had become an embarrassment.

Mr Atkinson said: "The flats were in a part of London where a great deal of improvement was already going on, and where there was considerable pressure from young people wanting to buy homes."

World drive to improve ship safety

By Michael Bailey
Transport Correspondent

A drive for improved ship safety on the oceans is to be launched by the United Nations maritime arm, international delegates decided in London yesterday. In a significant shift of emphasis this will be done not by agreeing yet more rules and regulations, but by persuading governments to implement those that exist.

That would immediately bring about a sharp improvement in safety and pollution through better selection and training of seafarers and improved inspection and maintenance of ships. Mr C. P. Srivastava, secretary-general of IMCO (the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization) said after its latest assembly.

"The conventions we already have are quite good, but some governments are not implementing them," Mr Srivastava said. "As the world maritime agency, IMCO is no longer satisfied to be the means whereby governments consult and formulate international regulations. We intend to pursue with governments how to get action. We cannot implement, but we can tell governments that we are behind them in their efforts to implement."

To show that we mean business, we will have no new conventions or assemblies for two years, to concentrate on enforcement."

Since 80 per cent of ship accidents involve human error, improved operation and manning, especially by flags and owners known to be substandard, is the best way to reduce accidents, and IMCO is helping various states, mostly developing countries, to set up or modernize marine agencies of a high standard.

Another key area will be persuading countries visited by substandard ships to act against them instead of leaving it to the flag country, when it might be a "flag of convenience".

Business News, page 21

Children taken to hospital after school accident

Mr John Hodgkinson, a teacher, and 12 children were taken to hospital yesterday after an accident in the laboratory at St Anne's School, Fareham, Hampshire.

Apparatus being used ignited, spraying sulphuric acid over Mr Hodgkinson and the children, aged 14 and 15. They were released after hospital treatment. A member of the school staff said of Mr Hodgkinson: "The children are full of praise for the way he ignored his own pain to help them first."

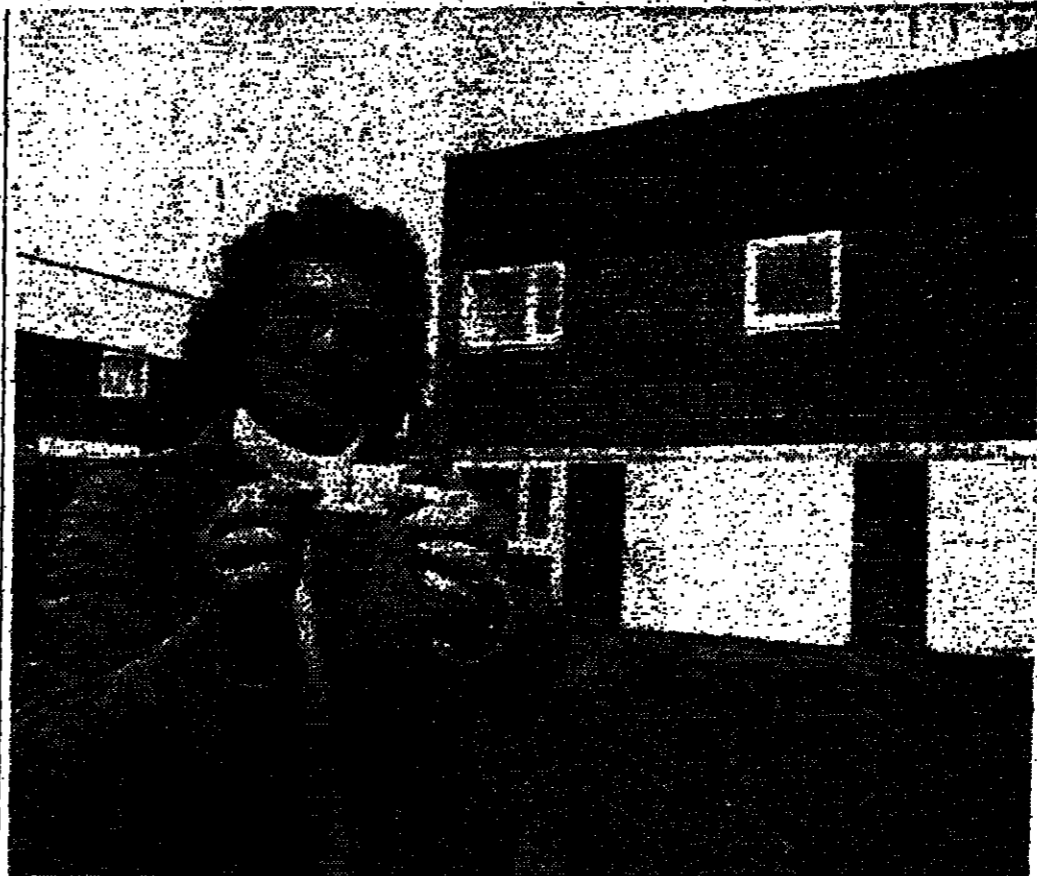
Books on safety checks 'missing after fire in warship' that killed eight

Two safety check books disappeared after a fire in a new warship that killed eight men, Mr Justice Boreham was told at York Crown Court yesterday.

One of them, a diary, kept in a cabin in the new missile cruiser Glasgow, was supposed to be signed each morning by night-shift fire patrol men. It was designed to be a record of all safety infringements found during the 24-hour shift. It was being found at Swan Hunter's Neptune shipyard at Wallsend, Tyne and Wear.

It was stated to have been seen last on the morning of the fire when Mr John Richardson, personnel officer at the shipyard, was on duty. He said he had not given his men any instructions on removing oxygen pipes left running down the ship after burners had finished their shift and gone home.

The court had been told that oxygen from a burner's hose



Mrs Matthews heading the queue outside the house she hopes to buy for £4,950.

Queue forms for £5,500 homes sale

From Our Correspondent
Sleewbury

A big queue of bargain-home hunters from all parts of the country built up in Telford new town, Salop, yesterday. All

were hoping to buy a house for under £5,000 today.

Telford Development Corporation is selling three-bedroom terraced houses at prices ranging from £4,200 to £5,500, with 95 per cent mortgages. The houses, built 13 years ago, are being offered at 70 per cent of their market value.

By yesterday nearly 70 people were in the queue, which was headed by Mrs Olivia Matthews of Leytonstone, London, who

with her son Stephen and his fiancée, Mrs Angela Falk, was seeking a home for the young couple. They had been there since last Wednesday.

The influx of outsiders annoyed local people, who feel the sale has been published too widely.

But a corporation official said: "The houses are being offered on a first come first served basis, and this was well known before the start. This is the second batch of homes to be offered in this way."

Doomed diving bell 'lacked own heating system'

From Our Correspondent
Aberdeen

There was no self-contained heating system in the stricken diving bell that plunged to the bottom of the North Sea after its umbilical lifeline, life wires and guideline wires were cut, a fatal accident inquiry was told in Aberdeen yesterday.

But later a senior diving inspector for the Department of Energy said that the department was carrying out two investigations into the disaster.

Mr Edward Hammond, a diving supervisor on board the support vessel, Star Canopus, at the Beryl Alpha platform site at the time of the accident on November 26 last, said there was no government requirement for it, then, and no satisfactory equipment on the market at that time.

"At the time of the accident it was not efficiently possible to do it. Into the best form of heating within diving bells."

Mr Hammond said that the support vessel, Star Canopus, at the Beryl Alpha platform site at the time of the accident on November 26 last, said there was no government requirement for it, then, and no satisfactory equipment on the market at that time.

Earlier he told the inquiry that the emergency procedure for a bell which had lost contact with the surface was to clear the support ship to move clear, then to diver to look out from the bell to clear away severed wires and cables, return and seal the bell and jettison weights.

That would be only a last ditch attempt, however, and he agreed with a solicitor representing the families of the dead

divers that the two men trapped inside the bell on the seabed found the emergency procedure impossible to use.

The bell also had not carried a "pinger", a directional signal transmitter which normally sent a signal to the dive control pinpointing the position of the bell, because, he said, it was found to be interfering with the dynamic positioning of the support ship.

Mr Hammond agreed that it was pure luck that a mini-submarine mother ship and second diving support vessel had been on the scene, otherwise they would not have been able to do anything for the stricken bell.

He said that financial constraints were partly responsible for the diving ship having no minisubmarine, and added: "I suppose they could be provided if the money was spent."

Mr Roy Giles, senior diving inspector for the Department of Energy, said the department, as well as investigating the heating of diving bells, had also reached agreement with offshore diving companies for "pingers" to be put in all future bells, and in two months guidance would be issued for the operation of vessels using dynamic positioning.

He had found the Star Canopus diving system safe and sound when he inspected it. The inquiry, before Sheriff William Macleod, was adjourned until November 26.

Residents' help sought to beat South Wales vandals

From Tim Jones
Cardiff

The South Wales Constabulary and members of Cardiff City Council are planning a series of public meetings in council estates in an effort to persuade residents to combat the increasing vandalism that is devastating their areas.

From the depressed valleys to the coastline, vandalism is an endemic part of life in South Wales, and one authority, Mid Glamorgan County Council, estimates its cost at more than £400,000 a year. That figure does not include major offences against society such as the arson at Pen-y-wan Comprehensive School earlier this year, which cost £500,000.

The elderly and infirm are particularly vulnerable, fearful old ladies have complained of being forced to spend their pensions on protection in order to keep young thugs at bay.

Inevitably some of the worst damage is done in the valleys, where unemployment is high and amenities lacking.

Shocked by the extent of it,

the new chief constable of South Wales, Mr John Woodcock, has assigned two plain clothes officers to each of the three worst areas: Cardiff, Swansea, and Merthyr Tydfil, to deal exclusively with vandalism.

Mr Woodcock has appealed directly to the public to help in the new venture, which if successful after three months, will be extended throughout the force.

"The cost of vandalism is unacceptably high," he said, "and I find it difficult to believe that members of the public do not see it happening. We want them to give the police their valuable assistance."

In Cardiff Councillor Stefan Terlecki, a member of the South Wales Police Authority, blames parents for encouraging vandalism. "They just do not bother to find out where their children have been at night," he said.

After a successful campaign to have 15 bus shelters erected on a council estate Mr Terlecki was horrified when within weeks they had all been wrecked. "I am hoping that public meetings will make people realise that it is they who pay for vandalism, and that the answer is largely in their own hands."

Court test for doubts in consumer law suggested

By Robin Young
Consumer Affairs Correspondent

The Government is considering testing doubtful areas of consumer law in the courts.

Mrs Sally Oppenheim, Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, has opened talks with Mr Gordon Borrie, Director General of Fair Trading, about legal steps which might be taken.

Mrs Oppenheim has also told the Consumers' Association, the publishers of Which?, that she is anxious to speed up matters in cases where individual consumers might be reluctant to instigate proceedings because of the expense and the uncertainty of the outcome.

There are several areas in which cases might be brought. The Supply of Goods (Implied Terms) Act 1973 adopted a new definition of merchantable quality, which has not been

tested and which has left many lawyers in doubt about the circumstances in which their clients might hope to get their money back for defective goods.

The Unfair Contract Terms Act of 1977 strips exclusion clauses of legal effect unless they are "fair and reasonable". As far as is known no cases have been brought under the law since it came into force on February 1, 1978, so there has been no test case to what judges would consider.

Litigants also would find established precedents useful for the assessment of damages for spoilt holidays. Compensation offered by tour operators was widely put at stake as seldom great enough for aggrieved clients to consider suing.

Mrs Oppenheim's idea is that Mr Borrie should bring test cases to court to clarify the law rather than to obtain redress in the individual cases.

Mountbatten murder case evidence questioned

From Annabel Ferriman
Dublin

A defence lawyer in the trial of the two men accused of murdering Lord Mountbatten of Burma yesterday raised a question about some of the evidence against his client.

Thomas McMahon, aged 31, a fitter, of Carrickmacross, Co Monaghan, and Francis McGil, aged 24, a gravedigger, of Ballinamore, Co Leitrim, deny murdering Lord Mountbatten when his boat was blown up by a bomb at Mallaghmore, Co Sligo.

Mr Patrick MacEntee, for the defence of Mr McMahon at the Special Criminal Court in Dublin, suggested to Dr James Donovan, a forensic science expert, that only a small part of Lord Mountbatten's boat had two layers of paint on it, a dark green layer and a lime green

layer, identical to the flakes of paint said to have been found on his client's clothing.

"If it was established that only a tiny percentage of the boat had the lime green structure described in court, the chance of it being honestly on the clothing of Mr McMahon becomes more remote," he said.

Mr MacEntee asked Dr Donovan whether he had worn special protective clothing when examining one of the cars, the men are alleged to have used, where certain paint flakes were said to have been found which matched those on his client's clothing.

Dr Donovan said he had not worn a white coat, but he could not have contaminated the cars because he had only put his head in to examine it and washed and combed his hair too frequently for paint flakes to remain in it.

The trial continues on Monday.

Girl swimmer's award

Sharon Lucas, aged 11 of Newark-on-Trent, Nottinghamshire, who had both legs amputated below the knee at birth, has won the Amateur Swimming Association's promise survival award.

End of the pier

The 146-year-old Royal Pier in Southampton is to be demolished, after its owners, the British Transport Docks Board, decided against spending £500,000 on maintenance.

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WEST EUROPE

M Barre's fortunes recover after period of gloom

Charles Hargrove
Nov 16
The political fortunes of M. Barre, the French Minister, which only a few weeks ago seemed to have reached their lowest ebb since took office in the summer of 1978, have now taken a decisive turn for the better. The Minister was allegedly involved in the real estate scandal in the 1970s, but his health had been under the strain and had to go into hospital at the time of the opening of the 1978 budget. The Minister, however, had, so political analysts thought, at least, a man without any personal ambition. Finally, the Minister of Labour, in a letter to the President, outlined the government's tasks for the next months—hardly a sign that the foreseeable future held any promise of a political comeback for M. Barre. M. Barre's personal standing, the latest opinion poll published by *France-Soir* today shows a spectacular recovery. His number of personal friends has risen in one month by no less than 13 points to 41 per cent—his best score since almost a year and a half. Finally, the *Gaulois*, which has been on a political course with the Government over 2,000 francs (222m) of budget cuts, showed a willingness to compromise in a meeting on this issue between M. Barre and his advisers yesterday, was widely expected beforehand. It is even possible still that

before tomorrow's deadline, when the budget must go on to the Assembly, the Minister will be found to have the support of a stable majority in Parliament. A possible way out would be for the cuts to be incorporated in a supplementary budget voted in the course of next year.

M. Barre has never attached excessive importance to his health, and his resolve would have broken down had a dozen times in the past three years, and he knows they can be interpreted in many different ways.

But this latest one cannot but give him satisfaction. Having been widely described as the most unpopular Prime Minister France has ever had, he has now, without budging one iota from his chosen line of policy, effected a spectacular recovery. He once declared in private that it was quite normal that Frenchmen should not be satisfied with him, after all the bitter pills that he had made them swallow. They often told him so when he travelled about the country. But before taking leave of him, they often took him by the arm into a corner and said in a low voice: "naturally, you will stay on, and will not change your policy."

The *Queensberry* rules are not conspicuously honoured in French politics, yet Frenchmen do respect political courage even in unpopular causes. M. Barre in recent weeks has seemed to them doubly a victim: first of unjustified attacks over his alleged involvement in a scandal, which proved, on his critics' own admission, utterly groundless; and second of his devotion to duty, to which he sacrificed his health. It was enough to help to swing the tide.

Angry sheep farmers meet M Giscard

from Ian Murray
Nantes, Nov 16
President Giscard d'Estaing today had to face up to two of his most trying problems before a Government — French soldiers and British sheep. He came to Rodez in the Aveyron, the capital of the French rearing country, to see the biggest demonstration about the British lamb imports have taken place. During this brief visit to the southwest the President had to accustom himself to crowds waving banners more than to crowds waving flags. In Rodez one painted banner showed sheep grazing on mountain pastures summed up the two problems. "The sheep will conquer," it said. "Larzac will live."

The Larzac plain has been a wrangling sore with the French administration for nine years now since compulsory orders were served on the sheep-rearers there so that the Army could use their land to extend

its camp and shooting range already there. But the sheep-rearers of Larzac have fought the soldiers off.

With money derived in large part from conscientious objectors, they have succeeded in buying up much of the contested land.

The President dealt in his luncheon speech with the problem of British sheep. The local farmers are convinced that Britain is trying to flood the French market with New Zealand lamb.

This will be one of the main subjects broached during the Franco-British summit in London at the beginning of next week. The President today pledged his Government's intention to defend the income of the sheep-rearers of Aveyron.

From Rodez the President flew on to Toulouse where a large left-wing and union demonstration paralysed the centre of the city for two hours. Many workers were on strike for the day and the schools were shut.

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before tomorrow's deadline, when the budget must go on to the Assembly, the Minister will be found to have the support of a stable majority in Parliament. A possible way out would be for the cuts to be incorporated in a supplementary budget voted in the course of next year.

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The *Queensberry* rules are not conspicuously honoured in French politics, yet Frenchmen do respect political courage even in unpopular causes. M. Barre in recent weeks has seemed to them doubly a victim: first of unjustified attacks over his alleged involvement in a scandal, which proved, on his critics' own admission, utterly groundless; and second of his devotion to duty, to which he sacrificed his health. It was enough to help to swing the tide.

It is even possible still that

before tomorrow's deadline, when the budget must go on to the Assembly, the Minister will be found to have the support of a stable majority in Parliament. A possible way out would be for the cuts to be incorporated in a supplementary budget voted in the course of next year.

M. Barre has never attached excessive importance to his health, and his resolve would have broken down had a dozen times in the past three years, and he knows they can be interpreted in many different ways.

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Mr A. K. Hlophe, the Swaziland Agriculture Minister, turned out barefoot and in tribal dress to address the conference of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome yesterday.

Bokassa claims he has no money

Paris, Nov 16.—Former Emperor Bokassa of the Central African Republic, was quoted today as saying he had no money and bitterly regretted the sale of his castles in France to a French businessman.

In a telephone interview with the right-wing newspaper *L'Aurore*, he said he had asked his son, Mr Saint Cyr Bokassa, to try to cancel the sale.

The former leader sold several French castles and properties to M. Bernard Tapie on October 22. The sale took place in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, where he found asylum after his removal from power in a military coup supported by France last September.

M. Tapie said he had bought the properties for about 12.5m francs (about £1.4m) with the aim of selling them by auction and giving the proceeds to the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef).

Mr Bokassa was quoted as saying he had been cheated by M. Tapie and had sold his castles under pressure. His son told *L'Aurore* that the properties were worth four to five times the price paid.

"I haven't got a penny left," the former dictator said in the interview. "I survive only thanks to the generosity of the President Félix Houphouët-Boigny (of the Ivory Coast)."

"To feed my children, and you know I have many, I have only my pension of captain in the French Army. I even closed down my bank account in France," he was adding.

Mr Bokassa, who served with the Free French forces during the Second World War and in the French colonial army in Indo-China in the 1950s, took control of his Central African country in a coup in 1966. He crowned himself Emperor in 1977.

His overthrow by his cousin, former President David Dacko, came after accusations by a pan-African commission of inquiry that he had ordered the massacre of 200 children because they had refused to wear compulsory school uniforms.

At the time of his removal, he controlled personally his country's main wealth, in particular the diamond mining industry.—Reuters.

Barracks bombed

Turin, Nov 16.—Terrorists hurled a bomb at an army barracks here, soon to be used for housing the Red Brigades leaders, police said today. The bombing, which occurred late yesterday caused light damage and no injuries.

But what does the French man in the street think of it all? *Sud-Ouest*, the Bordeaux newspaper, has published the results of a poll carried out by the *Sofres* between November 9 and 12. Of those asked 48 per cent think the news media should deal only with the political views of government and party leaders; while 44 per cent think it should also provide information about their private lives, their wealth, their state of health, and 51 per cent, against 38, consider it desirable that politicians should disclose details about their wealth, their health, and their private lives, as is the case in the United States.

But even if the press did publish this kind of information, 62 per cent would find it of little or no interest, and 40 per cent, against 36 per cent, believe French leaders and politicians to be "rather corrupt".

Nearly half of those asked believe that radio and television are subjected to a kind of censorship in France; and 25 per cent that the journalists themselves practise a form of self-censorship in suppressing news which might get them into trouble with the authorities.

OVERSEAS

Marching thousands in Iran become ever more strident

From Robert Fisk
Tehran, Nov 16
In the largest demonstration of its kind since the American Embassy in Tehran was seized by militant Islamic students 12 days ago, tens of thousands of Iranians trooped through the centre of the city today in support of the embassy occupation and the holding of the hostages.

Two miles away, almost half a million people, including Mr Mehdi Bazargan, who resigned as Prime Minister last week, attended prayers near the city's main university and heard one of the country's leading ayatollahs encourage the students to continue their occupation.

Mr Bazargan, sitting cross-legged on the ground, listened without expression as Ayatollah Montazeri, head of the committee of experts who have just completed writing the new Islamic constitution, told his audience that "the will of the Iranian people was behind the occupation."

Dr. Ebrahim Yazdi, the former Foreign Minister, sat next to Mr Bazargan, who resigned last week because of the embassy seizure had undermined his Government's credibility.

Almost half a million students were gathering not far away for a meeting in support of the Fedayeen, the left-wing guerrilla movement which is now illegal in Iran. The Fedayeen do not support the embassy occupation but have so far not voiced their opposition.

The Islamic sabbath has become a traditional day of demonstration. If the American Government had hoped that the week's events — the halting of imports of Iranian oil to the United States and the freezing of Iranian Government assets in American banks — created a more realistic atmosphere in Tehran towards negotiations for the hostages' release, it must have been deeply disappointed.

Outside the embassy gates, where the daily demonstrations have become an event for the American television networks, the anti-American slogans were shouted louder and more frequently than before.

Cloth banners of Ayatollah Khomeini 40ft long now hang from the high-rise office blocks outside the embassy compound, where Iranian revolutionary forces were paraded this afternoon to the applause of the crowd.

America waits for Tehran confusion to clear

From Patrick Brogan
Washington, Nov 16
American strategy for the moment for dealing with the Iranian crisis appears to be to wait for a development in Tehran. The Shah may return to Mexico as early as next week, depending upon his response to radiation treatment in New York, and the Americans hope that by then the confusion of authority in Tehran will have been diminished.

Mr Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr, a leading member of the Iranian Revolutionary Council whose responsibilities include foreign affairs, is apparently searching for a formula which will enable him to have the hostages released. The students who are in control of the embassy are opposed to this, and have threatened unspecified reprisals against the Shah if he is returned to Mexico.

Ayatollah Khomeini has said nothing. Although his staff has said that he will be incommunicado until December 5, an American television company hopes to obtain an interview with him and broadcast it.

Neither before nor after the hostages' liberation will the Americans discuss the Shah's extradition. If the hostages are set free, safe and sound, the Americans would be willing to inform Iran officially of the Shah's state of health and his intentions—whether and when he might return to Mexico, or go elsewhere.

According to a spokesman for the Shah, Mr Robert Armand, the Shah has received the first three of a series of 10 radiation sessions to treat a tumour in his neck. He has responded well so far, but no decision on whether he can be moved can be taken until the treatment is completed next week.

The Shah was admitted to hospital in New York on October 22.

Kissinger anger over Cambodia

Continued from page 1
who had the original and corrected proofs to hand. Which version was the truth?

"Both," Dr Kissinger replied, launching into an enormously detailed answer that left Mr Armand speechless but adding, "which is not in the book."

Dr Kissinger admitted several times that the United States had made mistakes over Cambodia, but he did not specify them. But his known wish to have had his country intervene there, and his harder came through only in his laudatory over Washington's ambivalence in "never doing enough to prevail and doing enough to keep the war going."

He resisted the accusation that the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia was the fault of the Americans.

He said the record showed that North Vietnam resined all his efforts to keep Cambodia neutral in 1970 (a year after the secret US bombing of Cambodian sanctuaries began).

Dr Kissinger would admit to one regret—concerning the Middle East. It was that in 1974 he had not extended the Israeli disengagement to Jordan, and so averted the present problem with the Palestine Liberation Organization. He blamed it on the Israelis—and Watergate — depriving the United States of presidential power.

Dr Kissinger was not running for the Senate—not yet anyway. He would reconsider if Senator Jacob Javits of New York were to retire. He had no prediction who would win the presidential election next year but held himself ready to be consulted by any candidate.

Shawcross said: "Last night Mr Kissinger's book proves my case that in Cambodia was a side-show. He dealt only with the 1967 secret bombing and the 1970 invasion and then Cambodia entirely disappears for over two years and 900 pages."

Quiet cheer by British on conference success

A glow from the Rhodesia attic

By David Spanier
Diplomatic Correspondent
Victory, as Napoleon observed, has many fathers, so it is hardly surprising that the success, up to now, of the Rhodesian constitutional conference is not one man's work.

In any case Lord Carrington, the Foreign Secretary, began the conference in a pessimistic frame of mind, and is not all that optimistic, even now. Certainly, he would not regard the past 10 weeks as the happiest time of his life.

Still, it was Lord Carrington's game plan which set the course for the conference and which has proved so effective so far. He decided, looking at all the previous efforts to get a settlement in Rhodesia, that whatever their theoretical merits they were far too complicated. Hence his approach of officials in that he likes to go single-mindedly for a solution.

The head of the Rhodesia Department of the Foreign Office, Curiously enough, though one imagines the Foreign Office as a place of high ceilings and rooms lit by chandeliers, the Rhodesia section is up in the attic and looks a bit like the interior of a beached submarine.

Perhaps that is a reflection of the problem's inaccessibility all these years. The senior official in charge, Sir Anthony Duff, has been the chief mover behind the scenes. A tall, quiet unassuming man with a shy, sly, sense of humour, he is a solid African hand having been High Commissioner in Nairobi.

In the early days of the conference he clearly went a long way toward gaining the confidence of both sides in working out the new constitution. His admission to hospital for surgery last month has left a gap in the British ranks.

The head of the Rhodesia Department, Mr Robert Renwick, would be regarded as the driving force of the delegation. His colleagues see him as extremely decisive and rather untypical of officials in that he likes to go single-mindedly for a solution.

He has kept a firm grip on the press proceedings, and despite one or two arguments behind the scenes, inevitable in such a fraught negotiation, seems also to have the confidence of the African delegation's spokesmen.

The British team have let themselves go so far as to utter a restrained "hooray". But considering the immense difficulties ahead no one is really celebrating.

People like Mr Renwick, and Sir Patrick Laver, his predecessor, give the impression that they know more about the minutiae of Rhodesian politics than most people know about their own home towns.

Previously living in Salisbury as the British contact man, but now back in London, another key member of the team is Mr Derek Day, formerly Ambassador in Addis Ababa.

The style of the British delegation has been set by Mr Nick Fenn, the conference spokesman. There is a steady precision to his answers which tend to wrap up imprecise questioners like a combine harvester.

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Liberty of expression

his definition of freedom I have marched in step with a similar movement on the part of *The Times*, as expressed in its editorial columns, and of its Editor, as expressed in the countless conversations we have had together. I am sure, therefore, you may say that I am nothing but a boss's man, but on the whole I think you had probably better not.) And until very recently indeed, when the tide began to run against me, I have been hard, dusky and uphill all the way.

Of course, it has not all been an argument about liberty. My own complete liberty to choose my subject has enabled me to indulge to the full (some would say to the brimming over) my predilection for the history of the most extraordinary diversity. It is just as well that there is no alleyway too narrow, ill-lit or obviously without issue for me to feel impelled to march up it. I could not possibly write a general column three times a week if I were not inquisitive, to the point of impertinence, about almost everything, and off-hand I can only think of two subjects on which I almost never write at all, one being education, in

which I find myself simply uninterested, and the other Northern Ireland and its troubles, on which I have never been able to think of anything to say that has seemed to me worth saying.

But that has left plenty of room. Not long ago, inspired by nothing more than idle curiosity, I tried to count the number of distinct topics I had written about in my *Times* column, restricting the list to those I considered more than once, and I discovered that they numbered something like seventy. I shall not impose the list on the reader, but I am obliged to say something about the omissions, before making some general observations about the inclusions.

A very large proportion, of course, fell because they dealt with something so tied to a particular and limited event or moment that they have lost all interest now; in one instance,



I had, for instance, found myself acting as fulegman for the moderate forces in a number of trades unions, including those of the engineering workers, the seamen, the journalists and the actors. (These last were—and still are, for that matter—engaged in a struggle with a group led by Yaneska Redgrave who dubbed the group "Yaneska's Loonies", and the name appears to have stuck. I mention this because it enables me to answer a question often put to me about my conduct wrongly answered by those who have not made inquiry of me before offering confident ascriptions of their own; I did not, though I wish I had, think of the "Loonies" as being across Sir Shortly Floorcross, but I did call Sir Reginald Manningham-Buller Sir Reginald Bulling-Manner.)

I found that the most efficacious help could be given by the provision of crucial information about their internal elections and other ballots, and my readers were sometimes outraged to find my day's inches of help could be so small.

The moderate union candidates on whose behalf I was vicariously soliciting the votes of those who had them. Obviously, these columns would be of no interest to those who were not interested in others which served an equally limited purpose.

Similarly, there were subjects on which I have written repeatedly, but for which a single, representative example of my views was clearly enough for the book; many of my regular readers have their particular likes, or, more frequently, dislikes, and I have regularly subjects (Wagner, to whose music I am incurably addicted, is the one that arouses most hostility, but he was used to that himself), and whereas in a column appearing three times a week I could ride hobby-horses as often as I pleased, it seemed to me a mistake to ride too many in a collection of this kind. And again, there were subjects to which I returned again and again, but which were nevertheless subjects that were diminishing returns as far as my readers' interest was concerned. The area in which this has been most bitterly true is that of persecution in totalitarian countries, and I have many scores of such accounts in my column, and have found it increasingly difficult to meet the necessity of finding every time a new way of saying the same thing, the same thing, the same thing, of our times; Country X is committing an injustice against Citizen Y. (In this connexion I must here disclose that I am barred by the governments concerned from entering the Soviet Union, the United States, the British Empire on the one hand, and South Africa on the other. These decrees constitute a pair of campaign medals that I wear with considerable pleasure, and I have a profound suspicion that I am doing it for partisanship while wearing only one.)

When I was planning this anthology, but before I started to read through the material from which I was to select it, I had desultorily planned to make a few political and economic columns something like the spine of the book; they would, I thought, run throughout it with the rest being fixed in as the ribs and other ancillary bones of the skeleton. But that was in theory; when I turned to practice, I got such a shock as I had never had before in my life.

The only suitable image is the most familiar one; it was like looking through the wrong end of a telescope. This is not just a matter of perspective. It is of the men, though certainly a close spectator of politics in the Heath-Wilson years is likely to have been immunized against it. It is not a matter of life, and indeed to have got the antibody so firmly entrenched in his veins as to ensure its passing on to his children, to the next generations beyond him. Did people like Harold Wilson and Denis Healey, Edward Heath and Anthony Barber, govern us, did they, in fact, in the fact alone, to take them seriously? I suppose so; in the files I worked through there were, those and a score of others, who were not, yes, pushing and shoving and gibbering, laying waste the country in the name of schemes for its improvement and mulcting us of uncountable millions to feed their own pride.

But it is not for that reason that the reader will find very little discussion of politics and economics in these pages, despite the very large proportion of my weekly space I have devoted to these subjects. It is the subjects themselves that are so close to me, not the subjects themselves but in the context of a day that is only the sorrow of theirs but which already seems aeons later. The turning tide is carrying out to sea not just this or that claim to the cure of all our national ills, but the very idea of political cures: what diminishes politics so rapidly is the growing realization that we have been looking in the wrong direction, literally for centuries, in our search for a solution to problems considerable more profound, enduring and complex than the balance of payments or industrial relations, and that only when we change the direction of our gaze and look inward shall we begin to understand anything of worth understanding. It is because the politics and economics of the world uncovered in this book no longer seemed to me worth understanding that I have omitted almost all of what I said about them.

So much for what I have left out; now for what I have put

to. A journalist who writes about everything that interests him inevitably produces, over time, a complete picture of his life. In my case, my friends are wiser to describe my form of personal map-making by saying that from reading my column regularly they can find out everything about me except the most important thing. This, a reader of my book, let me say, of the articles not included in it, will discover, among a good many other things, that music means a great deal to me and has played a large part in my life, that I am a car lover, that the car jumps on me, that I am one of our society like the Post Office and the Gas Board, are

not close to my heart, that lawyers and judges are even further from my effections, that Alexander Solzhenitsyn is one of my heroes, that I do not admire busybodies, censors and suppressors but that I am often as unimpressed by the case made against them as by that made on their behalf.

The picture that emerges is, I suppose, of a liberal increasingly aware of the inadequacies of liberalism and a rationalist who finds himself less and less able to rely on rationalism; a man at ease with the art of the eighteenth century but distrustful of the basis of the Enlightenment's optimism; above all one who, day by day, finds himself more and more convinced of the importance of the inexplicable.

It is in this last area that I can recognize most clearly what my friends mean when they complain about the ground I fence off even from them while perfect strangers are given conducted tours over my passion for Mozart, haute cuisine and the English language. I plead guilty, but beg leave to make a statement before sentence is passed.

First, a man who describes his
in part as much of his activities
as I do must inevitably be
determined to guard the areas
of his life which he regards as
the sole use of himself and his
intimates. Second, I promise to
reform, and can bring evidence
that I have already to some
extent done so. In one respect,
I have started to do so, and
I already out of date. I have
begun to write (because I have
begun to think) very much
more about what I have called
"the inner life" and the
inexplicable. This in itself has
involved revealing more
of myself than I have previously
felt comfortable about doing,
and I have no doubt that the
second volume of my selected
writings will amply reflect this
development.

In the end I return to liberty, on which all depends, including, of course, my ability to express my opinions. During the past decade Britain has never been free of the totalitarian threat, whether it came well as from without, though it has been as depressing as it is ironic to observe that the internal threat has grown as the external has diminished: I have said that I am confident that Britain will be proclaimed a Soviet Republic at about the time the people of Moscow put their rulers on trial. But in truth lovers of liberty have less to fear from those who deliberately seek the destruction of liberty's destruction than from those who fail to see that there is nothing of value—nothing—in this society other than the individuals who compose it. It is the failing of the end which, succeeded to enlarge the lives of many, succeed only in narrowing the lives of all; he who most loudly proclaims himself his brother's keeper all too often is the one who literally and grimly justifies the

Yet it is necessary to ask why the individual is all important; if asked, I can offer only a tentative and interim answer. It is surely because if the universe makes any sense at all it only does so in relation to the individual, the individual something of an unfashionable word, but one for which no fully adequate substitute has yet been devised—has a duty to develop itself towards the highest of which it is capable. Some say that this is a duty which is accomplished over many lifetimes; it is not necessary to believe as much to insist that the argument is not to be understood in terms of

material betterment: many who have nothing in this world are far richer in spirit, because they have no added needs, and which they are poor, than those who are poor beyond the dreams of misery, though they lie on mattresses of soft down, and on their backs, too, because their stomachs are uncomfortable and their backs are hurt. A political prisoner is more free behind the barbed wire than the guard who patrols it, as half the world's prison literature makes clear.

This is not an argument, though it has often been used as one, for telling the poor not to mind their poverty. It is an argument for believing that only as individuals can we hope to realize our full potentialities, and that creating the conditions for realizing these potentialities is the obligation of civilization itself. Evelyn Waugh put it neatly in a recent interview, part of which Ronald Harwood incorporated in his stage adaptation of Waugh's autobiographical novel, *The End of the Affair*. "If you are not sympathetic with the man in the street, have you?" Pinfold replies:

You must understand that the man in the street does not exist. There are men and women, each one of whom has an individual and immortal soul, and such beings need to use streets from time to time.

But only from time to time. Some suggestion—as to what happens to them for the rest of the time will, I hope, be found in this volume. And more, I expect, in its successor. As my rate, that is my own view of what I have tried to do; whether others share it I shall no doubt now discover.

© Bernard Levin

Bernard Levin has adapted this article from the introduction to his collection of essays Taking Sides, published this month by Jonathan Cape at £5.95.

It has often occurred to me that journalism is a very odd profession. The of mankind spends its time, raising its voice, inter- ing and even engaging men to coars to play silence, in order to express its views. "What I say is, I want my opinion to be told you what I think it seems to me " "It is full of such pleas- ant, interesting, useful in- s, against a host of mis- ms, and at any given moment e must be fully ten talkers every listener. Nor is that all. It is a thing that is of the essence of thought. It should demand to be ex- cessed, and very few of those to form them ever stop to der and anybody else is interested in attending to expression.

the journalist, however, is
to indulge in this universal
vice, and so far as I am
are, no newspaper proprietor
ever, even by way of experi-
ment, on exacting a fee
in the journalist's honor;
them the hospitality of his
umns in order that they may
rein express views, which
the journalist's honor, and
even more rarely felt to
indispensable, by those to
om they are addressed. Yet it
is but clear that many
journalists are not only
the successful ones are not
the profession, for the
terial rewards, pleasant
ough it is that they exist as
the journalist's honor, and
the journalist's honor, and
a science, a craft, a con-
fidence trick or a disease. Its
siding practitioners are in it
silly and mainly because they
are sane and rational. I
said that I have a very great
all to say.

I have been in the business of expressing my views in writing for a little over a quarter a century; for most of that time I have been writing on radio and off, in expressing them on radio and television: I do know how many words I've thus committed to print, and I know that I don't wish to be cold; but it must be a good many millions now, and with the exception of *The Pentameter Years*, a book I wrote in 1960, I have no account of the 1960's, and I am delighted to recall that an extract from it appeared in this very place at the time of its publication. I have never before or otherwise been born to live for only a few hours; and I disappear as swiftly as they

That has never worried me. At the least, for the moment, I have allowed myself to be lulled by the prospect of preserving any of my journalism, and have until now resisted the blandishments of my publisher, in rationalizing my reluctance by saying that I did not want to be bothered by the minutiae of the phenomena until he had written another custom-made book. But the truth is much more curious. I have had, for as long as I can remember, an obsession, without knowing it, with rolling up my papers and burning them. I keep no files of correspondence, or of anything else, or that matter; indeed, I keep no pieces of paper at all any longer than is necessary for dealing with the business or the family. Letters are destroyed when they are answered; bank statements and cheque books as soon as the income tax return has been agreed; diaries on the morrow of the New Year. No one now can read my journals, or wish to write my biography, even if it were otherwise, no one would be able to. (Perhaps

had better pause here to assure the reader that my past contains no startling secrets that must at all costs go to the grave with me. I can not in the legitimate school of the Royal Family nor am I on the run from the Foreign Legion; my name is what I say it is, and am the thing I seem whatever that may be.

It is those things that in
 happen selection of words
 between, boards I am breaking
 self-imposed canyon, and I shall
 no doubt say for this act of
 subjective simplicity, with some
 of my friends, many
 of the people, that the work
 of selecting, marshaling and
 announcing my choice has itself
 constituted a deeply disturbing
 experience. But this has been
 nearly every time, every person
 I have given: even now
 the appalling sensation of
 feeling not one Doppelgänger
 but hundreds, so that at times
 I feel like a man trapped be-
 tween two mirrors, with reflect-
 ions multiplying and reproducing
 themselves in infinity.

For, of course, I have not retained the same men over the years of my career, and in the following pages that I have canvassed for this compilation I have met every one of the men who have been. I found this so distressing that eventually I had to make it easier for myself by limiting the number of men to 100. I took only three exceptions from the mid-lists, all the articles in this volume come from the period during which I have been writing a regular column for *The Times*. For the past six years of this period I have also written a regular book of reviews to the *Observer*, and I am also selection of these is included. But before that, nothing.

I rejected the earlier work because a cursory inspection of which was all I could bear suggested that it was not sufficiently substantial to be worth putting into a book; I suppose this, too, is a rationalization, designed to protect me from the parade of ghosts that reading my journalism has summoned. And presumably those ghosts represent intimations of mortality.

On the other hand (and at this point I shake myself like a dog coming out of the water, snatching these gloomy thoughts) I may be that the disbeliever who is to endure the preparation of my autobiography reflects no more than a salving of the public horrors that was chronicling, together with a salving of the misjudgments of the water of the world. I disapprove of the world's conclusions and hitherto unguided inconsistencies for which I had been responsible. In one respect, however, I can be sure: I am not a disbeliever in prophetic consistency, and accurately prophetic insight: I believe I was the very first journalist to write regularly, frequently and unequivocally about Harold Wilson's gift of prophecy. I was the very beginning made clear my conviction that he was, and would even more fully become, that everybody else has only now begun to believe. Wilson's gift of prophecy did no good, as nobody believed her; neither, alas, did more than a handful share my assessment of his gift. I am now, I hope, the first of Harold Wilson's associates to ask anyone believe my exact rendition of the inevitable leadership of his national catastrophe. Any reader who reads this book, I am sure, in this subject may be surprised to find none of it here, and even more so at the absence of any of my more recent comments on the subject. I am sure, or that, too, which I shall discuss in a moment.)

When, in 1970, I left my
 component with the Daily
 Worker, I received a number of
 substantial numbers of letters
 from editors to write
 for their journals. These in-
 cluded then Editor of the
 Guardian, Alexander Hetherington,
 as well as William Rees-
 Mogg, who at that time had
 been Editor of The Times for
 about three years. I told the
 Editor of the Guardian, in
 declining his offer with my
 genuine regret, that I felt (as
 I understood I did) that I wrote more
 comfortably against the grain
 than the paper I worked for rather
 than for it. I was, I think
 then, already identified with the
 stance of the Guardian, and so
 well, not opposed to, but
 detached from, that of The
 Times, that the latter seemed
 to me to be a more distant
 membership both for me and for my
 readers.

Then, suddenly, my mother-in-law moved a long way since those days, and I have moved as far, and perhaps further, mostly in the direction of the right. It is not simply a matter of right and left, let alone of political parties. The greatest issue of the year during which I have lived is the sharpening conflict between collective solutions to national problems on the one hand and personal freedom of individual liberty on the other. Readers of the following pages will find good deal about liberty in them, both at home and abroad. I am sure that many of them will have seen a very real deal more. But to be in favour of freedom is comparable to being a carpenter. A great number of people are not even as I was settling down to

rent this, my eye fell upon a paragraph of a statement by a Harlequin Council, setting out its view of the responsibilities of the public libraries in its bailiwick, and which, with the accompanying instruction to the librarians to reaffirm that racist and sexist writings have [sic] no place in libraries and that censorship must be opposed²³); it is less easy to find and pursue consistently a line through the inevitably conflicting claims to a wide range of *all* of the materials which are genuinely incompatible with others. Through the years of my contribution to *The Times* it has been more and more pressing borne in upon me that the greatest illusion from which societies like ours suffer is the illusion that individuals which diminish the liberty of individuals can increase that of the people in general; the most important lesson I have learned during those years is that that is a *rumorous* fallacy. The reason for this fallaciousness is obvious enough: the liberty only exists for and in individuals, not for or in abstractions called society, let alone the state. Moreover, the attempt to make the abstract more free by making the individuals who constitute their freedom more free, can end only in a continuing decline in liberty.

In my increasing emphasis on

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 277: 1039-1043.

•Levin! Turn
down that
damn Wagner.

company in Main China. The Old Vic had experienced difficulties in presenting *Hamlet* to audiences whose tastes are unfamiliar with western drama. In the event, the play went very well, thanks particularly to the efforts of a group of Chinese actors and actresses, but the company encountered "the gang of five"

The company's director, Toby Robertson, just back from Peking, said that instead of the usual arrangement of one person reading a simultaneous translation for the audience, the three actors and two actresses played the different parts in *Hamlet*, exactly matching the English words and conveying a lot of the comedy and feeling of the play. "It was the best simultaneous translation I have ever heard," he said.

Nevertheless audience reac-

and the Magnificat
ven its premiere by
Christmas.

work seems to be at present: he produces for the Monty *The Life of Brian* he BBC television *ment of Youth*.

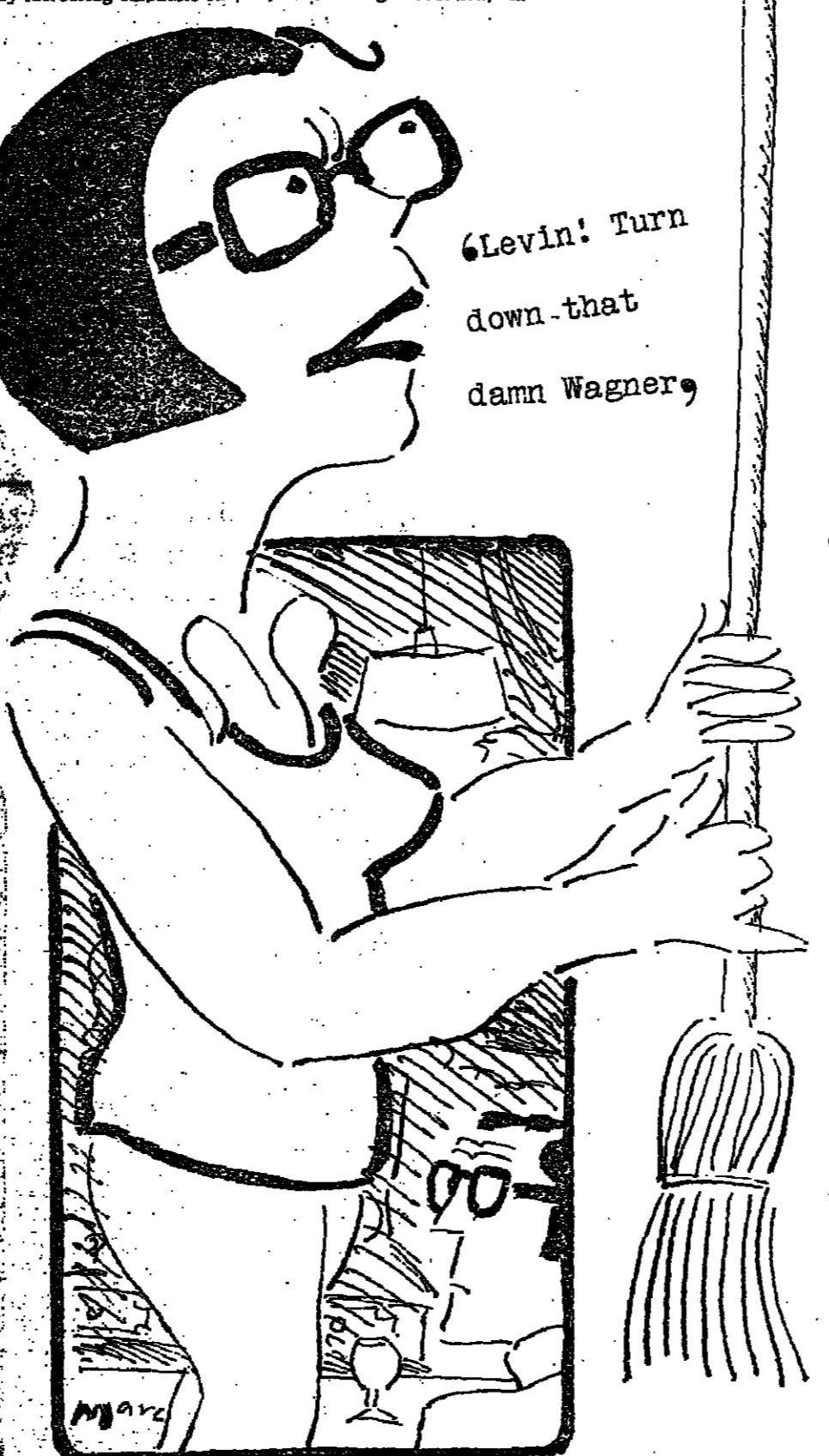
of 38, his new pro-
put him in the rare
a younger compo-
of having to turn
s of commissions.
is that he is about
on a somewhat
ject, an opera based
fe of a sixteenth-
composer.

le, a work of his for
er medium ballet.
re its London pre-
November 27. His
amentations and
choreographed by
Asian will be per-

Filmin
New York

The Third
by General
and other
which has
publishing
rain and
looks like
film.

Universal
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peared the
be stillborn
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starting a
However
an experim
United Sta
been condu
latest. An
matched



Records of the year: concert music

Barenboim's rare service for Schumann

Concert music has always been the great bulk of the LP market, and it is to be expected that new releases of the past months should go far beyond the limits of space or of reader's reasonable patience. So, picking my way through the scattered shippers, I offer a selection of new recordings, and partly by taste and partly by the march of time, of my choices are from more recent issues, though some have been included in the past.

First, the new recording of Schumann's symphonies (DG 2531 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000).



Barenboim recording Schumann in Chicago

and remarkable feeling for orchestral blend can receive undivided attention in his Dukas programme with the Rotterdam Philharmonic (Philips 8500 538, £5.45).

Another varied collection is offered by Kyung-Wha Chung, who follows Chausson's *Poème* with showpieces by Saint-Saëns and Ravel, all accompanied by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under Charles Dutoit (Decca SXL 6851, £5.25). Chung is incapable of relying merely on elegance, even in such a charming piece of nonsense as Saint-Saëns's Introduction and Rondeau. Everything has to be given a full measure of expression, though this is applied with such resourcefulness that the music never gets clogged. Needless to say, Chung's ability to be both romantic and agile is particularly helpful in the Chausson, where she marvellously matches ripeness to tension.

More acerbic tastes will be better satisfied by the pungent and vital performances of Bartók's first two piano concertos recorded by Maurizio Pollini with the Chicago Symphony under Claudio Abbado (DG 2530 901, £5.06). High-pressure energy and joy abound, with passion made objective by Pollini's turn of phrase into sweet music. His command is dazzling, and his tone, which has none of the oboe's usual sourness, becomes more than the needed growth of the first part, where the earlier work is revealed to view as never before, though with a paradoxical gain in mystery and malevolence.

Remaining in the twentieth century for the first of my miscellaneous, I come to Pierre

Boulez's four-record boxed set of orchestral works by Ravel (CBS 79404, £14.99 until January 1). This lacks the works with soloists but has everything else, including such rarities as the brittle toy fanfare for *L'éventail de Jeanne*, the exotic overture *Shéhérazade* and the sea picture *Une barque sur l'océan*. The set also has the perfect guide to Ravel, who has the capacity to make everything work precisely in such crafty scores as *Ma mère l'Oye* or *Le tombeau de Couperin*, and to bring flood to the ironic schizoid to *Daphnis et Laïs*.

Another modern master, Stravinsky, has been well served by a sumptuous recording of *The Firebird* from Colin Davis and the Concertgebouw (Philips 8500 537, £5.45) and by Yuri Temirkanov's account of *Petrushka* with the Leningrad Symphony (HMV Melodica ASD 3705, £5.40). The latter is not well recorded: apart from anything else, it is simply a poor recording. But the second *Daphnis* suite, so that the clamorous "Russian Dance" is crammed uncomfortably into the centre grooves. However, we do not have many opportunities to hear Stravinsky, and this is a wonderful result in fascinating, even if they do get smugged in the more complex ensembles, exaggerate rhapsodies and use the wrong edition. What they can provide, and it is worth sampling, is what Stravinsky himself said was in the final scene: the "smells of Russian food—shchi—and of sweat and glistening leather boots".

I end with something again Russian, again from the world of ballet, and now to be sampled without reservation.

William Mann

PIANO

Artistry of bravura and delight

Although 1979 has brought nothing new from the keyboard's most legendary nonagenarian, RCA's two-disc retrospective *The Artistry of Artur Schnabel* is a must for his old friends (RL 02359, £7.00). So many favourite encores are there, done with that affecting simplicity which throughout his later years (the recordings date from 1960 to 1971) shimmered every burst of bravura, every ravishing sonority, every tug at the heartstrings. For me, his Chopin (but why not C sharp minor waltz?) and his Fauré, Ravel and Debussy take pride of place. But though so much more Gallic than Tchaikovsky, Schnabel is scarcely less persuasive here in miniatures by Brahms, when he met and idolized in youth. As for Villa Lobos's *Poetichello* and Fauré's *Rituel Fire Dance*, what visual recollections memories they evoke!

For the rest, my sequence is chronological, starting with Beethoven. And collectors will be delighted to know that 32 sonatas from Alfred Brendel are now available separately as well as in a Philips box (6768 004, eight discs, £45.25). In strongly characteristic yet undogmatic performances, Brendel is destined for the same immortality as those of Schnabel. Anyone wanting just a pair of titled favourites, the Waldstein and Appassionata, will find Brendel's brilliant illumination of detail, both spiritual and purely colouristic, from Gilels (DG 2531 143, £5.06).

Gilels and his daughter Elena again give pleasure on a specially chosen light-hearted Brahms interlude in selection of Schubert duets of course including the great F minor Fantasy (DG 2531 079, £5.06), although in the great space of Schubert duets overflowing from birthday celebrations into 1979 my favourite still remains the very generously filled two-disc album from Christoph Eschenbach and Juris Frantz (EMI SLS 5138, £8.95) because "ensemble" is so effortlessly attained, musical perception so acute and the general style so gracefully Viennese. A Lieder recital from Fischer-Dieskau recorded during the Touraine Festival's homage to Schubert, bringing rarities alongside old favourites, is also outstanding for its lovingly detailed, besides incanting tone, with

the bonus of Richter as the crystalline and unquenchable pianist (DG 2530 988, £5.06).

Though his catalogue already boasts outstanding performances of Chopin's Preludes from Pollini, Murray Perahia and one or two others, Ashkenazy's new version is still enormously welcome for the warm humanity and serene separation of the personal mood pictures, never like left-over études, though I would have preferred a little more continuity in presentation of the set as a whole (Decca SXL 6877, £5.25). There is more acutely sensitive Chopin playing from Fou T'song in the B minor sonata, the Barcarolle, the Berceuse and the Polonaise Fantasy (CBS 61866, £3.99), though response to detail, manifest in slightly fiftieth-century, sometimes underlines structure. Arrau's searching intensity in his two-disc album of Nocturnes is infinitely preferable to personal mood pictures, never like left-over études, though I would have preferred a little more continuity in presentation of the set as a whole (Decca SXL 6877, £5.25). 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17. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 277, 1996, 1033-1034.

Fred Emery

A week of bitter medicine

During our absence, Westminster colleagues said some of the fun had gone out of political reporting now that the Conservatives were in with such a majority. Something similar was conveyed on my arrival in Washington in 1970—and look what happened then. For all our sakes let's hope that any analogy with Nixon ends right there. But there is no gainsaying that this has been an extraordinary week to return to print.

Our monetarist, anti-public expenditure government can get control of neither spending nor money supply and so turns the credit squeeze into something resembling a mangle. It delivers ultimatums to the EEC and in the same breath, it scores an uplifting near-triumph in creating a Rhodessa settlement. Yet neither the shock nor the glory can be contemplated for more than a moment when along sweeps Mrs Thatcher's confirmation of the very darkest rumour.

It is simply that a traitor has been seen. The law onto journalists as her first reflex: the lack of information from which Prime Ministers dare to operate must be one of the lessons, for that is still an active issue today.

But to the main business: the country. The realization that the situation is worse than many politicians expected has begun to sink home with a vengeance. One Cabinet minister confided before the week began that he doubted whether Mrs Thatcher, in the heady days of wielding supreme power, had herself yet fully grasped how bad things were, and how immeasurably great the effort to turn Britain round would be.

But after this week's three per cent increase in M.L.R. in an attempt to put a clamp on the elusive money supply, there is little doubting that the Prime Minister is prepared to administer whatever medicine she thinks is needed to halt rising economic temperatures—never mind the cure. If there is nothing else, monetarism has to be enough. Mr John Biffen, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, told us in a speech this week that Cabinet ministers outside the Treasury circle admit they have no effective counter-argument to the present policy, even though they share scepticism of the monetarist lengths being pursued.

They believe the strategy is right. But they want to be in a position to advise on prudent course adjustments to meet shifting seas, without being pounced on and accused of a U-turn as if it were something disreputable. They admit this is less easy since Sir Geoffrey Howe proclaimed at their Blackpool conference that there would be no U-turns. Instead, they are referring to what they call "damage limitation".

To the extent that there is tangible disquiet among Conservative backbenchers it is the extreme discomfort of going home to face constituents angry over mortgages, or crushed in their hopes for small business expansion. At the same time they are saddled with the Government's claim that there has been no cut in the level of public spending. Even Conservative now want to know why there cannot be even more cuts in spending.

One answer may lie in what some MPs see as the most fascinating policy struggle facing the Government this winter.

It is in Mr Layman's terms, whether public sector borrowing must be cut still further, or whether it can be allowed to rise to cope with unavoidable social expenditure during a recession. The Government's new chief economic adviser, Professor Terry Burns, is credited, now as

earlier, with favouring a higher PSBR. And, whenever asked in the Commons, both Sir Geoffrey Howe and Mr Biffen, have declined to answer.

On that decision will hang cuts and misery, especially if Mrs Thatcher fails to get the £1,000m change she wants in the EEC budget. There are signs of "damage limitation" in other policy areas. For most there is Lord Carrington's boldness in preference to a continuing year in Zimbabwe Rhodesia that would have been certain in any bilateral deal. The trade union reforms, too, when they come will not be as sweeping as the right-wing would like. Even the proposed tighter immigration rules, however much a handful of liberal Tories may find them petty, are, arguably, not as dishonourable as the proposals on which the Tories fought the election.

Why came trouble for Mr Whitehead, the Home Secretary, when his government is heard, when he has now stage-managed such a furor that the proposed register and quota arrangements, so dear to the anti-immigrant lobby, will become unworkable?

Why, indeed, except that one man's small mercies become another man's outrage.

Picking up the contest clues again

When Robinson Crusoe saved himself from shipwreck he also salvaged much useful equipment including, as readers must know, some tools on which to build a shelter and three very good Bibles. Celebrities nowadays are led to expect (in addition to the standard desert-island equipment) a selection of games, photo records and a book of their own choice. There are some of our readers, however, who would not find these amenities entirely satisfying and would miss the daily delivery of a crossword for the regular stimulation of their wits. Sadly, these readers have had a foretaste of the agonies of desert-island withdrawal from the crossword habit.

One is reminded of Ben Gunn, marooned for three years on Treasure Island when he lived on goats and berries and oysters. "But, mate," said he to Jim Hawkins, "my heart is sore for Christian diet. I've dreamed of cheese—cheese—most and woke up again, and here I were." Likewise our shipwrecked puzzlers, though no doubt surviving through the barren months on such other fare as the island provides, may have been dreaming the while of their own version of Ben Gunn's toasted cheese.

"If ever I can get aboard again," Jim promised Ben, "you shall have cheese by the stone." I am delighted to be back on board and in charge of the cheese store. I hope that the months of comparative inactivity have not blunted the skills of the cheese-makers and that substance on alternative diets has not spoiled the palates of consumers for our particular brand of cheese.

Not entirely idle...

I speak of comparative inactivity because the crossword team has not been entirely idle. Cutty Sark, Times Whisky, showing admirable spirit, refused to be deterred by the suspension of publication of *The Times* and advised Times readers (in headlines to the last few puzzles which appeared before suspension) to apply to them for particulars of the 1979 Cutty Sark/Times National Crossword Championship. If *The Times* did not appear on January 22, as it happened, *The Times* Crossword did appear on that day, in an item in the London and South-east edition of *Nationwide* (on television) when Roy Dean, the first ever Cutty Sark/Times National Crossword Champion, closely pursued by former national finalists Mr Sally Stevens and Sir David Hunt, solved a specially commissioned crossword in the infuriatingly short time of 84 minutes. Meanwhile the wise virgin who had kept the headlines concerning the 1979 Championship or had seen it advertised in other daily or Sunday papers applied for and received the qualifying puzzle, and sufficient numbers qualified for all seven regional finals—with no overflowing, so that for the first time no fiendish eliminator puzzle was necessary. The qualifying puzzle will be published in *The Times*, before long, as will the National puzzle before mentioned, and the puzzles used at the regional and national finals.

The venues and dates of the seven regional finals, with numbers of competitors and the names of those qualifying for the National Final (on the basis of one qualifier for every 60 competitors) are given below. With the exception of one puzzle point dropped by one of the runners-up all qualifiers scored maximum puzzle points of 124 (the total number of clues in the four puzzles to be solved), the placings being determined by time bonus points, reflecting the speed of each competitor completing the puzzles correctly. At the York and London B finals there was a tie for first place and this was resolved by means of a tie-break puzzle which was solved by the

York champion in just minutes and by the Lo champion in just 9 minutes. Birmingham Grand March 18: 82 comp winner, Dr John Sykes, photographer of Abingdon times previously national champion; second, Mr. Mead, civil servant o. rbanham. Edinburgh George April 1: 54 competitors only one qualifier i. National Final, the win Rev. Colin Morton of past. York Viking Hotel, A. 72 competitors: winner, Mr. Wilfrid solicitor of Halam near; second, Mr. Joseph solicitor of Brigg. Bristol Dragonara Hot. 13: 82 competitors: Mr. William Pilkington, government officer of second; Mr. Peter Bond, patent agent Basing. Chester Grosvenor Hot. 20: 71 competitors: Mr. Harry Hodgson, director of Birmi second, Mr. Geoffrey M. consultant of Crofton. London A Piccadilly June 23: 175 competitor, Mr. Roy Dean, dipl. Bragg (the 1970 champion); equal sec. James Atkins, singing of London (twice the champion) and Mr. Tom computer systems co. of Basing.

London B Piccadilly June 24: 156 competitor (after tie-break) M. Todd, artists print-m. Kensington; second, Si. Main, artist, Basing. Bromley; third, Miss Gee, house mistress at den School. Fourteen of these 15 q. from the regional fin. David Hunt, been un. second in the 1978. i. Mr. Eric Rodick at i. cadilly Hotel on August 19, for the National Final, the tent. series. As in the region, the com. puzzle was to solve four Times words, with a 30-minute allowed for each, while were also given for t. all-correct solutions f. spectators; proceeded further, followed by crossword competitions spectators during the i. Time bonus points.

Of the 16 finalists, 15 solved all four puzzles and the order among them was dec. time bonus points. The 16th, Mr. Philip Meade (representing an average time of under nine per puzzle), was the L. regional champion a original 1970 national c. Mr. Roy Dean.

The Silver Trophy, f. the Championship, f. Cutty Sark Scotch Wh. presented by Mr. John B. their managing direct. champion also receives and for two in Paris, gallon of whisky and television set. Other prize-winners were the up, Dr John Sykes, with bonus points, who re. weekend for two in P. James Atkins with bonus points, weekend in Amsterdam) and M. Sever with 55 time bon. (weekend for two in London or Edinburgh). prizes were also prese. the next four final. Cynthia Gee, Mr. Harr. son, Mr. Philip Meade. 1978 champion, Mr. Eric Dean modestly his success to luck. saw them back and pr. can hardly explain th. three places in the Ch. ship came to be taken i. of the only four cor. to have won the cham. during the previous yir. Details of the 1980 C. Championship will be i. in January.

Edmund Ake

Crossword

Mailer and a monument to death

In 1977 Gary Gilmore, a habitual criminal and double murderer, was executed by firing squad at the State prison in Utah. Gilmore himself had insisted on the sentence being carried out. *The Executioner's Hut* (Hutchinson, £3.95), Norman Mailer's latest book, is the story of this macabre cause célèbre and its background.

Is it a novel? Yes, says Mailer, although all of it is fact, and as he jokingly said, he didn't want to be in the non-fiction best-selling list along with "those sneaker books".

It's been, therefore, on the fiction list of the *New York Times* for three weeks. I wrote it to read like a novel. We have certain expectations when we read a novel, and they are different for non-fiction. If we read *Heart of Darkness* or we read the author, "Please analyze Mr. K.," what an extraordinary character.

The people in the book are small town Americans, whom he views with interest and a kind of affection. Certainly, he says, they have no standards of life that the respectable would recognize, but they have their own code, and a great deal of low life is revealed, in the frankest possible way, by their own words.

"In Utah there are mountains to the east and desert to the west and the superhighway in between—the towns are attached to the highway and one town is exactly like another. I would probably understand life on the hoof far better in London than in Utah—life is episodic there, you are never going to climb a mountain and descend into a valley".

This sinless existence is true, he thinks of all the western states, and much of small town

America. It was a surprise to him. He's been a New Yorker all his life.

"I had come to a point where I wanted to take stock—if I didn't have to earn a living I'd have stopped writing for two years. I'd been working on my Egyptian novel—I've been writing for eight years about Ramses IX, of the twentieth Dynasty, 1130 BC. This is not really an historical novel, because next to nothing is known about Ramses, so I can make up anything I want... unless there's an Egyptologist to prove me wrong!

"Then Gilmore came up, and I thought I can probably do a good, quick book, which is the worst thing to say in the literary world, but some of my best books have been written like that—*An American Dream* in eight instalments for *Esquire* and *The Armies of the Night* in nine weeks."

He got a Pulitzer Prize for that. So the idea doesn't inspire me with horror, in fact it exhilarates me—and Gilmore embodies all the themes I have been writing about for 20 years—that the soul may expire, in cupping the body, that there is a fire to die—and Gilmore was also the kind of psychopath I have been interested in."

What happened to the quick short book? "I had this indefatigable researcher, Larry Schiller, who kept on doing more interviews, and I'm terribly competitive. He has a totally different set of values, and it got to be almost three dimensional—while one of us would be photographing the underbelly of the other, the other would be taking pictures of the head."

Schiller is also a major character in the book, and Mailer worked with him closely over the months, and finally interviewed him. I said to him "Do you really want to see this story in the book?" and he said "There it is—do what you want."

"I couldn't understand a man who knew he would be in the book being able to talk about himself with such clarity—he added a dimension to me. I think he'd love to be a great man—a great movie producer—he's not all that interested in the quick buck and money as such."

"He also spends in a lavish way. He used to drive me nuts. He'd take a hotel suite and I'd say, are you out of your mind, have you any idea of the cost of paying for this suite, he'd say, I'm now taking after my mother."

What of Mailer the politician, co-founder of the radical newspaper, *The Village Voice*, and one-time candidate as Mayor of New York? "It's not so much



Norman Mailer: a good, quick book

I was getting fonder and fonder of him, and I didn't necessarily want to be." In the end, Mailer thinks, his portrait of Schiller might be more critical than it need have been, in compensation.

The writing took a year, the editing three months. "I just wrote 25 or 30 days in each month, eight to ten hours a day, in a small room like a jail cell. But my mother didn't raise me to work this hard. When I was young she used to say don't

work so hard, you'll injure yourself."

"My father was a marvellous fellow—in the middle of the Depression when he was dead broke and hadn't a job he'd be wearing spats—my mother was a very hard worker and after many years of taking after my father I'm now taking after my mother."

What of Mailer the politician, co-founder of the radical newspaper, *The Village Voice*, and one-time candidate as Mayor of New York? "It's not so much

that I have given up politics—politics is given up on."

Teddy Kennedy will get the nomination, he says. "Though I don't think it's certain. The American media is like Madame de Staël, it throws its friends toward the island provided they have been dreaming the while of their own version of Ben Gunn's toasted cheese."

There are no causes to fight for, except, he adds, with a fair amount of mischief, the nationalization of the oil companies.

I was at a dinner party last summer and next to me was a woman from Houston, and the price of gas had gone up that day, and I said why not nationalize the oil companies—they were behaving so badly, and the equivalent of prison for a corporation would be, say, 10 years nationalization. This woman got obscene—she called me the same dirty name seven times in a row."

It has, perhaps, been his role in American life to introduce the idea of a dirty name. He has called the same dirty name. This may have been true in the past, he says, but now. "I'm an old piece of cheese—Camden running at the edges. There's no single idea you would really offer yourself for any longer." And with that, and a shout of laughter, Norman Mailer prepares to return to his home in 1130 BC.

Philippa Toomey

How Oxfam got into the big league

The bold and ingenious pioneering work of Oxfam in bringing the first western aid to the starving millions of Kampuchea against appalling odds has irreversibly transformed the character of Britain's largest direct-action charity.

Because it was the first, Oxfam has received enormous publicity and now finds itself acting as coordinator of more than 20 western non-governmental relief agencies in the unprece-

dentented Kampuchea relief programme.

After a slow start, British people's response to the genocide in Kampuchea may fail to inspire Kampuchea appeal has reached overwhelming proportions, spurred by ATV's horrifying documentary and the runaway success of the campaign launched by BBC television's *Blue Peter* children's programme. Now Oxfam may channel £6m in British and

foreign voluntary aid by Christmas to Kampuchea alone, irrespective of the £10m it would have expected to raise this year anyway for all its other projects.

Oxfam's crucial role in the period during which the hands of the great international agencies like UNICEF and the Red Cross were tied by political red tape is well enough known. Less well known is how the charity tackled its self-imposed task. Oxfam's deputy director, Mr Guy Stringer, told *The Times* during a brief interval at Oxford between frantic forays in the Far East how he and his colleagues achieved their breakthrough by inspired improvisation.

The opening move was to help organize the first western relief effort: a flight to Phnom Penh, the devastated Kampuchean capital, by a chartered aircraft carrying medical supplies. Oxfam's technical officer, Mr James Howard, went with it and stayed for 10 days to assess needs.

Meanwhile Mr Stringer was in Singapore hiring a barge the size of a football pitch, a tug to tow it and buying 1,500 tons

of basic foods to put aboard. Even a catastrophe on the higher feelings: most of the first consignment of rice put aboard the barge was discarded in the nick of time, to be thoroughly rotten and had to be replaced.

Mr Stringer, an extraordinarily energetic and resourceful former marketing director of S.I., arrived in Singapore on September 23 with a briefcase containing £50,000.

After celebrating his birthday on board the tug, Mr Stringer brought the first barge into Kompong Som harbour on October 13, with £200,000-worth of supplies and a briefcase containing £50,000.

"We found hardly any trace of governmental organization in Kampuchea," said Mr Stringer. "The minister of economics was waiting for us on the quayside and I presented him with a typewriter and a box of stationery. As he walked through the unparalleled devastation he found the deserted streets almost awash with discarded banknotes. 'Rice is the only currency now,' he said."

Even though the tug had run up the wrong Kampuchean flag

on its arrival, the initial wariness and distance of the authorities in Kompong Som soon made way for a distinct warmth towards the Oxfam team, who were the first Western visitors to enter the area in five years.

Oxfam's normal role is to provide funds and expertise for small-scale agricultural, sanitary and other projects in third-world villages. It usually also makes an emergency cash donation when a natural disaster strikes. Now it has been called upon to direct and prolonged action on a massive scale to help alleviate one of the great human catastrophes of history.

At the Oxford headquarters, volunteer bank clerks process the flood of cheques. Officials admit to concern that the sheer scale of the Kampuchean disaster has pushed some very serious needs in other parts of the world into the background—Nicaragua, Dominica, East Timor and the rest.

The strategy accords well with Oxfam's painfully acquired expertise in 37 years of helping the needy and involves achieving spectacular effects by the

most cunning use of limited funds. They found a waterworks, for example, out of action for the lack of simple chemicals and spare parts and arranged to ship them on one of the barges; they found a fish-farming net factory and whisked up a consignment of netting, twice as local people could catch fish again.

When the Oxfam people reached Kampuchea, the country possessed 83 lorries (some of these borrowed from the Vietnamese) and one railway locomotive. All over the west, volunteers are organizing shipments of trucks; the hunt is on in France for four more locomotives of the right type and even for Khmer-alphabet typewriters.

The way in which little Oxfam tried to fit in and respond spontaneously to the spot to the endless list of Kampuchea's needs is very important, indeed. Mr Stringer told a meeting of volunteers in Oxford when I was there: "We are blessed by this opportunity to help, and hope we shall not fail them."

Dan van der Vat

SPORTS DIARY

Taking a new look at Wembley

The Benson and Hedges tennis tournament at Wembley has had all the trappings of a showbiz success except for a slightly embarrassing dearth of "top-tenners" on court. But there may be radical changes when existing agreements expire after next year's promotion. The sponsors are not convinced that their connexion with the Grand Prix circuit and the Association of Tennis Professionals is worth the price.

Grand Prix tournaments are granted some protection—not enough—from competing events that might lure the celebrities away. In return 12 per cent of the prize fund must be invested in a bonus pool distributed at the end of the year to the most successful players. Wembley is also an ATP "special event" which means that Benson and Hedges pay ATP for their support. For three years the fee was about £12,000 a year. This year and next ATP are taking a cut of the gate instead.

In spite of the expensive insurance thus taken out with the Grand Prix and the ATP, the promoters had to look on with helpless dismay while no fewer than ten of the 25 "direct

acceptances" withdrew from the Wembley starting line.

Though the sponsors will not openly admit it, they are considering the advantages of dropping the Grand Prix ATP, and instead, negotiating with perhaps eight leading players to compete in an exclusive, star-studded event.

Leonard Owen of Benson and Hedges, the tournament director, would go no further than to say there would have to be changes. "This year I'm disappointed from two aspects—the entry from the top of the market and the number of people dropping out. This is one of the best events on our sports programme but we worry about aspects—the reputation we've had in the past three years."

Oscar Wilde was joking when he wrote that nothing succeeds like excess. The plethora of Grand Prix tournaments has to some extent damaged their quality. Wembley must have suffered because rising prices had made London less attractive to players and their wives than it used to be; and, as Stan Smith was saying this week, "Wembley used to be a big stop. Now it's easier to pass. There are too many alternatives. It comes at the end of four or five weeks in Europe and some of the players are tired."

Tom Gorman said that when

he joined the circuit in 1969 "there were only about seven or eight major championships—coupled with the Davis Cup—that you geared your season for. Nowadays the top guys still prepare for the Grand Prix championships. They don't play as much as the rest of us, who would find it difficult to get by on 16 tournaments a year. I was going to recommend a special ATP classification of three MEs a year—with withdrawal because of mental exhaustion, medical note not required."

The British challenge

In the absence of Christopher Mottram and Susan Barker who did not enter the British challenge at Wembley this week, Brighton next week is hardly impressive. Britain's resources are looking threadbare. Nobody of comparable class is chasing Mottram, John Lloyd, Mark Cox (who is 36), Virginia Wade (34), and Miss Barker.

It was therefore encouraging to hear that Roger Taylor, who has three times reached the semifinals round at Wimbledon, would be coaching 25 British juniors from December 23 to 30. But they will merely be

youngsters on holiday with their parents at the Taylors' second home, a residential resort at Vale de Lobos, in the Algarve. The recently completed tennis facility, which Taylor designed himself, has 12 courts (six of them floodlit), a swimming pool, saunas, and a bar and restaurant.

In Britain Taylor does similar work with juniors on a part-time basis for the Lawn Tennis Association. "But there's not much continuity for players and coaches who form a relationship. The problem is money. The play of the British game is that we're having to look elsewhere for income."

The advertised prize money on the circuit is all it seems. On the Grand Prix circuit, for example, 12.5 per cent is automatically lopped off for the bonus pool. The players have the tax problem common to all of us and often the mortgage problems, too.

They have to pay commission fees to agents or managers, travelling expenses in the air and often on the ground, and frequently the cost of accommodation and at least some of their meals.

This is not to say that the cheques, bounce, but their impact on players' bank accounts is by no means as resounding as the celebrities' prize money figures may suggest.

Sally and Frew McMillan had

G've mashed your y jamas, but I can't get the oil stains out.



In 1967 they compete same arena. Brown con. fesses. On the Mole in hunter Championship. Every rat over the sun (militar fence). Three later they were engage.

There are strong that the later even bungled fixture-making men's circuit may yet worse confounded. For two years World Cham. Tennis have run an un. ful tournament at Wem. the week after Wimble the Association of Ten. fessional have run the successful Nations Cu. pedition. Dusseldorf second week in May.

Next year WCT are in on the Nations Cup which means a competi. tween two big-money e. total of £450,000 is i. for the leading players massive international sponsors naturally des. The spite, pettiness, and plain folly at the all this are too dista. discuss. But it will so. because Frew was schedu. only for doubles and his par. ne scratched. The McMillan's have an affection for Wem. because it reminds them of the time they formed their own doubles team.

Rex B.

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MR CARTER COMES BACK

The next election for President of the United States will not take place for almost a year. Yet already, to an unusual extent for an occasion when the incumbent is able and expected to run again, American politics is dominated by the fluctuating fortunes of the candidates. This is because it has been taken for granted, over the past few months by most observers and active politicians in the United States that Mr Carter could not be re-elected. This was this assumption which induced Senator Edward Kennedy to overcome his previous reluctance to get into the race. The strategy of waiting for 1984 no longer looked so appealing when it seemed that the White House was bound to be occupied for the next four years either by a Democrat other than Mr Carter or by a Republican. The race was so open because Mr Carter appeared to be the latest of presidential ducks.

This weakness of the incumbent—which runs counter to one of the most hallowed traditions of American presidential politics, though not to more recent experience—can be attributed to three factors: the new rules for the nomination of candidates give such predominance to the verdict of primary elections, especially on the Democratic side, that the decision has been effectively taken out of the hands of the party bosses. This means that presidential patronage, which can more easily keep local notabilities in line than secure the allegiance of a mass electorate, is of much less value in achieving the reelection of the incumbent.

The second reason for Mr Carter's weakness is the weakness of the United States. The country is plagued by inflation, unemployment and the prospect of recession. It has an energy crisis which both undermines its position in the world and reflects its diminished strength. It can no longer influence nations and events as it has become accustomed to do through its postwar years. In this world, the true power was in the White House, but whoever is in the White House is bound to get much of the blame.

Mr Carter's third difficulty has been his own performance. The

failure here has been more in political style than in the substance of policies. This has affected his capacity to communicate both with Congress and with the public. As a consequence, an impression of amateurishness has been conveyed by the stories emanating from Washington—an impression that has not been corrected when the public have seen for themselves a pleasant man delivering apparently naïve comments. Until now Mr Carter has been liked as a person more than he has been respected as a President.

But that is what may be changing. He is coming across now as a firmer and more articulate President than at any time since he took office. His handling of the latest crisis in Iran has won him unqualified praise even from such a hostile critic as Mr George Meade, the retiring president of the AFL-CIO, the central organization of the trade union movement. Mr Carter's measured action, combining strength and restraint, has demonstrated one of the continuing advantages of the incumbent. The electoral rules may no longer favour him as they did. He may have to take the blame for acts of God and other men. But only he can act in a crisis: the others can only talk.

Moreover, Mr Carter's own talking has suddenly become more effective. His speech on Thursday to the AFL-CIO on the Iranian crisis was judged to be one of the best of his presidency. A month ago at the opening of the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston he displayed an unexpected wit and panache in a setting that was uniquely favourable to his most formidable challenger. But Senator Kennedy has himself seemed less impressive since he openly joined the presidential race. Before that he was acknowledged as a celebrity—now he is judged as a candidate—and in some critical respects he is found wanting.

His assets remain notable. He is the best public speaker in American public life today. He has a personal presence which Mr Carter lacks: it is distinguished and experienced Senator, with a much higher reputation for hard and knowledgeable work on Capitol Hill than is readily appreciated on this side of the Atlantic. He has shown himself

capable of choosing and managing a staff of high calibre—a skill in which he has far outshone Mr Carter, whose White House is still by no means a model of order even after the reorganization of last summer. Mr Kennedy's standing is high in states where there will be key primaries, not only in New England but in New York and Illinois, where he now has the powerful backing of the party machine in Chicago. Above all, this is the family name.

But Chappaquiddick still haunts him, and the fact that that issue remains alive enables questions to be raised about his continuing life style. In contrast to his skill as a mass orator, he has proved to be surprisingly inept in answering questions on television—and not only on Chappaquiddick. Nor is the Kennedy name an asset in every part of the country. He is the candidate who provokes the most antagonism as well as the one who arouses the greatest enthusiasm. He must obviously still stand a good chance, but if Mr Carter does defeat him for the nomination the President is likely to be seen in a new light. Mr Carter would then be a worthy opponent for any Republican.

On the Republican side there is no obvious challenger. Mr Reagan is well ahead at the moment in the polls and in local organization. But his age is bound to make him vulnerable, especially in such a long campaign. Mr Connally looks like a President, but the more that is heard of him the less he sounds like one. Either Mr Bush or Senator Baker would appear to present a safe choice against a Kennedy who seemed too dangerous or a Carter who was thought to be too ineffectual. But neither Mr Bush nor Mr Baker has the sparkle to unsettle an incumbent who has established his authority.

The best guess at this stage of the race is that President Carter, Senator Kennedy and whoever is the Republican nominee have an equal chance. That may seem no more than a statement of the obvious. But even to put it like that is an indication of how much Mr Carter has come back into the reckoning.

THE HESELTINE CEILING

Even a Government without an incomes policy has to own up to its incomes policy, when it announces the rate support grant settlement each year. The main variable factor in the spending of local authorities is the level of wage increases, and the size of the annual subsidy the Government is willing to make to the councils is mainly on its idea of what that level ought to be.

Mr Heseltine, Secretary of State for the Environment, was at pains yesterday to stress that the figure was just an assumption, without direct predictive or prescriptive content. Councils were free to pay more if they cut more elsewhere, he declared. But his warning that there would be no further adjustment to the cash limit, and his appeal (with overtones of menace) for councillors not to put a penny more on the rates than they must, gave his figure of the rate support grant a significance akin to that of many a target, norm or benchmark before it.

Like many of those, it has been composed more to be an influence than an accurate prediction. Council treasurers are drawing up their budgets on the assumption that wages will rise by three or four percentage points more than this, and the representatives of the council manual workers whose negotiations will shortly start the bargaining season in the public sector no doubt have a mind a figure somewhat higher again. The purpose of such stern warnings, is to convince both sides in the talks that any increase beyond that (and there is certain to be some) will have

to be paid for by cuts in services or manpower, or by rate increases over and above the stiff rises already implicit in the settlement.

When public spending cuts are afoot, local government tends to get more than its share of blame for extravagance. The nature of its services means that the many undoubted cases of wasteful management are particularly visible to the customer, and the cost is especially begrudged because the rates are the most unpopular of taxes. In fact local government as a whole has responded quickly to the repeated appeals for thrift from successive governments (and responded equally quickly to the relaxation of pressure, it must be said).

Mr Heseltine is asking for greater sacrifices than central government is to bear, and no doubt he will get them. Rightly, he is trying to avoid adding other factors to the upheaval. He has abandoned plans to reduce the overall proportion of government grant, and made the traditional Tory redistribution of resources back from London to the shire counties as small as possible. All cuts lead to their share of hardship and waste: local social services, for instance, will generally suffer more than National Health Service provision, though there are often long-term savings to be made by transferring services from the latter to the former. But in the context of the imperative national need to restrain the public sector—a need even plainer now than it was in May—the range of cuts implied need not be excessive, so long as wage settlements are not.

Mr Heseltine and his party have some hasty abuse of town halls to live down in their relations with local government. It was not long ago that the party (to the discomfort of its local representatives) was all for abolishing the domestic rate, a move which would wholly subjugate local government to central financial control. By free councils of the responsibility to find money to pay for their policies, it would turn every council into an animated pressure-group for higher spending. But the aggregate of local expenditure is today so large a segment of the public sector that governments inevitably have a legitimate interest in its level. The existing grant arrangements actually penalize councils which over the years make special efforts to economise, and reward those that do the opposite.

Yesterday Mr Heseltine indicated his intention to set this right, and to do so in the right way—not by abolishing the vital, if painful relationship with the local voter's pocket, nor by prescribing ceilings to rate rises or individual councils' expenditure. He means to use the grant mechanism to ensure that councils which overspend significantly must raise the excess from their own ratepayers. The detailed application of the plan will need study, and the transitional arrangement proposed for the coming year should not seek to do more than discipline the most spectacular overspenders. But the principle of sending them back to their own voters rather than imposing prohibitions from above is a sound one.

The most durable don

From Mr Henry G. Burton
Sir, Welcome back.

"Most Durable Don" is the title accorded by the latest edition of the *Gloucestershire Book of Records* to the venerable Dr Routh by virtue of his 63 years as President of Magdalen College, Oxford (1791 to 1854). Alliteration's artful aid has, alas, enticed the editor into error.

Dr Routh is admirably the most durable Head of a college at Oxford or Cambridge, but Fellows too are durable. Some of the major tourist attractions of the capital have been closed every Friday. This is sheer stupidity.

What can one devoted museum lover do to rouse the sleeping cohorts of museum workers throughout the country? Should I hide in a cupboard on Thursday nights to creep out at dawn and fling the main door wide open to the waiting public outside?

We should revel in the pleasure and inspiration the V and A collections give to their visitors. The time has now come when the time for museum visitors with a genuine interest in the arts to be more vociferous in urging all those concerned to bring about the reopening of the V and A.

A day at the V & A

From Mrs F. J. White
Sir, Some deprivations are bearable because one believes they are only temporary. Even during those long months without *The Times* the optimist among us always counted on its reappearance.

I wish as much could be said for the long deprivation of a day at the V and A. The months roll by and each Friday we still see the shameful sight of a closed door at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

When this foolish decision was made I felt, as I am sure many of the other two million annual visitors to the museum did, that this was a temporary measure. I should have known better.

This silly decision must not be condoned, excused or put up with any more. It must be recognized as silly and ill-considered.

The National Gallery, the British Museum, the Science Museum, the Natural History Museum are all open every day of the week, as they should be. How do we get ourselves into such political and economical tangles so that our national museum of the decorative arts is closed once a week? The museum is not just our national storehouse of the decorative arts but is an important teaching institution, for adults and

Level of minimum lending rate.

From Mr Geoffrey Rippon, QC, MP for Hexham, Conservative
Sir, A record Minimum Lending Rate of 14 per cent, set at the heart of the Government's economic strategy and underlines the dangers inherent in excessive reliance on monetary policies based on dubious monetary targets and statistics.

In the Budget debate in the House of Commons on June 13, I expressed my reservations about raising M.L.R. to 14 per cent. That, in my view, was calculated to fuel inflation rather than to contain it. So it has proved. And so it will prove again.

Nor many years ago it was possible to talk of a crisis rate of 6 to 8 per cent. That is a boom. That argument cannot conceivably apply to a rate of 17 per cent, particularly in present circumstances. High interest rates are a disincentive to money supply that, and so far as they strengthen sterling in the very short term, it is only by attracting "hot" money that we do not want, and to the detriment of the competitiveness of our exports. In the meantime, such interest rates needlessly put up the cost of servicing public debt.

Part of the problem is created by the reliance placed upon various monetary targets, notably M1 and the favourite sterling M3, which serve to fortify my own instinct that if we had no more statistics than Gladstone possessed we would be better informed.

The use of these statistics has attracted a good deal of attention over the years. The most recent example was the way in which the United States Federal Reserve over-stated M1 (the narrowly defined money supply) in the weeks ended October 3 and 10, by \$3,700m and by \$800m for the week ending October 17.

Sound economic policy involves a combination of budgetary, fiscal and monetary policies. Unfortunately, at present the so-called monetarists display an excessively mechanistic attitude which defies reason.

Certainly, nothing could be more disastrous than an international competition in pushing up interest rates. The International Monetary Fund would be well advised to deploy such influence as it still possesses to promote co-ordinated international action to lower interest rates before we go still further and faster towards turning recession into the worst depression of the century.

Yours faithfully,
GEOFFREY RIPPON,
House of Commons.
November 15.

Weapons for what?

From Monsignor Bruce Kent
Sir, A few months before he died Lord Louis Mountbatten left us, in a speech to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, this testament: "The nuclear arms race has no military purpose. Wars cannot be fought with nuclear weapons. Their existence only adds to our perils."

Our loss is that he is not with us now to underline that message to those who stimulate the arms race with regular warnings of new perils and who can think only in terms, meaningless in the present overkill context, of bargaining from positions of strength.

New medium-range missiles are quite unnecessary in the present situation even from the most traditional military point of view, according to the Institute of Strategic Studies, the damage that each side can now do the other, even after attack, is "incalculable". What is needed is not new missiles but some small, positive, unilateral action to lead to expansion in response to the recent Russian troop and tank undertaking.

Last week's American nuclear alert is one more reminder of the knife edge on which the future of our world hangs, as we know it, now hangs.

Yours faithfully,
BRUCE KENT,
Chairman,
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament,
29 Great James Street,
London WC1N 3AF.
November 13.

Freedom of information

From the Deputy General Secretary of the National Union of Journalists
Sir, Your leader on information (November 14) may well be published again later this year, but it is unlikely that at least one of your readers, the *Times*, will be published if the Government's new Information Bill is passed by Parliament.

Your report on the Metropolitan Police centre especially built to deal with mass arrests could well be one of the many victims of this new Bill. Even if the information was not classified at the time your reporter obtained it, the new Bill provides for a Government Minister to issue a certificate saying that post hoc information should have been classified as it was potentially dangerous if disclosed.

I do not know what the attitude of our lawyers is to such proposed legislation, but it would seem contrary to many of our legal practices for a Government Minister to be able to decide that someone is guilty after they have been charged rather than before. Bill that says that a minister can issue a certificate of that fact for a court gives incredible power to a government—virtual power in fact to say black is white, or white is black, setting aside the fact that Britain is going backwards in relation to access to information at the time when most western countries are moving towards greater access to information, surely this Bill is one that must be opposed by lawyers—if not by anyone else.

Your leader on this issue was welcome and I trust that *The Times* will continue to thunder until the Government decides either to withdraw this misconceived Bill or to retract it.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES HARKNESS,
Deputy General Secretary,
National Union of Journalists,
314/320 Gray's Inn Road, WCL
November 15.

The treatment of Professor Blunt

From Mr Brian Sewell

Sir, The sound of Labour Members of Parliament baying for vengeance with cries of Privilege and Establishment is 'medieval'; they should recall that Blunt's experience of the twenties and thirties was clearer and sharper for him than is the mythology of that period for them, and that views formed by him then were held with the same passion and for the same compassionate reasons as their own views now, and with many of the same changes in society as an aim. Heroinism and treachery are obverse and reverse of the same coin.

Nor does the Government emerge with honour: a bargain is a bargain, and they have not kept their side. For immunity of prosecution is meaningless if there is no immunity from publicity—the rule of Forti is one that swirls Mr Thricher. The withdrawal of his knighthood is a personal response to a personal offence. Blunt's entry brought the Royal Collection into the public domain with endless loans to exhibitions, the establishment of the Queen's Gallery, and the publication of catalogues of monumental scholarship.

The 1961 bargain must have brought benefits in counter-espionage: these I cannot assess, but the benefits to the history of art are well known to all who work in that field, for, despite desperate illness, those 15 years have produced more brilliant work than most scholars in a lifetime. And his selfless devotion to the Royal Collection secured that marvellous collection for this country.

And the fifth man is dead. Yours faithfully,
BRIAN SEWELL,
19 Eldon Road, W8,
November 16.

From Mr Michael Jacobs
Sir, May I as a student of Sir Anthony Blunt for many years, express my great indignation over

Return of 'The Times'

From Lord Rochester

Sir, Many moderates will agree with you November 13 that "low productivity is the central issue of our political life, as it underlies all the others". But you should not have added that "the central issue is Labour, Liberals, and moderate Conservatives, hope to contain the problem, because they believe it is not possible to confront it."

On the contrary, in my view the problem of low productivity needs to be faced more urgently than any other. But because it is so deep seated and intractable, and the measures needed to solve it will prove so painful and controversial, it can be tackled successfully only when elements in all political parties are prepared to confront it together.

This process will be hindered if the Government, in your advice and in inter-party legislation affecting trade unions which is more repressive than that now contemplated. You are nearer the mark when you say that you "want the public, and particularly the moderate moderate minority, to understand the issue."

Such an objective can best be achieved through activities which are sponsored jointly by employers and trade unions. They should be aimed at meeting the needs for a large staff of management and employee representatives to share an understanding of the basic facts concerning how a business is run, the effects of alternative uses to which money can be put, and the relationship between productivity, investment, prices and pay.

Yours faithfully,
ROCHESTER,
House of Lords.

From Mr Michael Smith
Sir, Barry Fitzpatrick of Natsopa writes in *The Times* (November 13) that the British Government's micro-technology and its social impact is really taking place.

As a member of the NGA trained on computer type-setting technology, I know only too well the fear for the future of the new technology will lead to increasing unemployment. The word "productivity" has become synonymous with the word "redundancy". It is the workers' fear in many big companies.

But this need not be true as far as small businesses are concerned. The opposite may be the truth: now that we have a new technology, rather than contraction. Witness the mushrooming of small circulation newspapers. I know of six that were launched in September alone, ranging from James Goldsmith's *Nip!* weekly to *Pennine Monthly*.

It is certainly true from my own experience. I work in a small publishing house. We installed computer typesetting four years ago. The increase in productivity made possible has meant that we are publishing more newspapers per year than before, and that provides more work for my union comrades at the printing presses.

One social impact of new technology, as far as I am concerned, the Department of the Environment's recommended ratio of beds to beds is 1:12. In two lodging houses in London, and there are more examples, the actual ratio is 1:500 and 0:500. Over 85 per

cent of the buildings were erected before 1914. In many there are little or no hygiene standards. Fire precautions, in the older buildings particularly, can be minimal with locked fire escape doors a common feature. The environment in the places is depressing, sometimes violent and always demeaning. Common lodging houses and large hostels raise the question of how relevant it is to castigate the occupants as workshy and inadequate, as frequently happens when even the most socially competent of us would be appalled and crushed by the conditions and attitudes in such places.

We need this Bill, as a modest start, but we also need to examine our responses to vagrancy and how much we perpetuate the condition.

I fear that we will get neither.

Yours faithfully,
DANNY LEVINE, Director,
North Lambeth Day Centre,
Royal Waterloo Hospital,
Waterloo Bridge, SE1.
November 11.

'Dickensian' lodgings
From Mr Danny Levine
Sir, On Friday, November 16, a private member's Bill, the Housing (Houses in Multiple Occupation) Bill has its second reading. The Bill seeks to regulate and enforce standards in, among other places, large common lodging houses and institutions used by the homeless and rootless: these places have been called "Dickensian". About 30,000 people live in these places. Even more sleep on the streets, preferring that to the grimness of what is intended to be basic accommodation for the poor.

The accommodation is dreadful, mostly decrepit, dangerous and old. More often than not it falls far short of existing requirements as to levels of services. As an example, the Department of the Environment's recommended ratio of baths to beds is 1:12. In two lodging houses in London, and there are more examples, the actual ratio is 1:500 and 0:500. Over 85 per

The language of Common Prayer

From the Reverend Michael Seward
Sir, The General Synod of the Church of England has just voted by an overwhelming majority to give Final Approval to the very latest service of Holy Communion which is based on 15 years of experiment and also to go ahead with the *Alternative Service Book* to be published next year. The Synod did this in the face of determined opposition from a large group of literary and quasi-literary "top people", many of whom make no pretence at being Christians. The Synod ignored their petition and received my own speech urging them to do so with, according to the *Church Times*, "loud applause".

Why is it that the present Synod and its predecessor, both relatively conservative bodies, have pursued liturgical change together with the authorization of modern Bible translations for liturgical use with such determination?

Anyone who knows the Synod with real intimacy will recognize that it cannot possibly be because of a love for change for its own sake. No, the issue is far more fundamental than that. What is at stake is the whole future of Anglican Christianity in this country. Put at its starkest, the choice in the next 30 years lies between a jewelled corpse or a living pillar of the church, rediscovered and applied, both to itself and to the community, the powerful gospel of a crucified Saviour: it will simply collapse. What is at stake is the truth of Christianity and its capacity to save and transform men and women. If that be not true and demonstrable then all the cultural and literary beauty of Tudor English is nothing more than the cosmetic mask of a Hollywood cadaver.

The Church has often been called "God's ark". The task of an ark is to be a lifeboat for humanity struggling in the water. Lifeboats are, and must be, primarily functional. Their beauty is in their capacity to do the job well. What the petitioners want is to turn God's ark into an ark royal, a regal barge for ornate and stately pleasure. I, a parish priest for most of my life, am much more concerned to get the ark out of the water, filled with God's "boat people" into a safe harbour. If on the way we can perch up the ship and paint her, "I'll well and good. If we can board and capture, or scare off, some of the leeches, vessels around, even better. But keep the ark afloat, and on course needs accurate modern charts not illuminated manuscripts. Thank God for the latter but let us keep them safely in our historic treasure chest in the hold. That is where precious relics belong.

In our contemporary Bible versions and our modern liturgies we have at last the clear and accurate charts that we need. I believe with all my heart that they are first-class documents and in regular use they are now saving their heavy lies in their effectiveness. Just such a concept of beauty finds its focus in a crucified Messiah.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL SEWARD,
Vicar of Ealing,
Member of General Synod,
Church Commissioner,
Ealing Vicarage,
11 Church Place, W5,
November 14.

From Mr John Osborne
Sir, At last! Cranmer lives yet! May the Turks of the Synod be scattered, and all contumacious priests be silenced forever. "Let Him be sent out of our hands. This man, I trow, has got the right sow by the ear."—Henry VIII.

Towering Thomas! A Man for All Series.
Yours faithfully,
JOHN OSBORNE,
Christmas Place,
Marsh Green,
Near Ealingbridge,
Kent.
November 14.

The last goodbye
From Mr B. C. Lowe
Sir, I hope to send the usual number of Christmas cards this year, but for a number of my friends this will be the last time they receive one from me. Severe economic pressure (not least the high rate of postage) necessitate this and in future I shall have to limit sending only to my nearest and dearest.

I would like to intimate my intention in the wording of the card, but how best to do it? In the briefest of words I would like to assure them of my undying love, avoid any thoughts of this transitory life and convey my warm feelings for them—always.

How would you if your readers have any bright ideas of words which would embody appropriate sentiments—without losing any friends.

Yours sincerely,
BRIAN C. LOWE,
45 Liebenroad Road,
Reading,
Berkshire.
November 14.

Sound reasoning

From Lieutenant-Colonel J. W. Naylor

Sir, The "fanfare" (?) sounded by the State Trumpeters to announce the Prime Minister's speech at the Lord Mayor's dinner last evening (November 12) was the School Call. (See *Trumpet and Bugle Calls for the Army*, No 71.)

I wonder why?
Yours faithfully,
J. W. NAYLOR,
The Corner House,
Mortimer West End,
Near Reading,
Berkshire.
November 13.

Rude awakening

From Mr Brian Simpson

Sir, The delightful wooden punt poles of Oxford are being superseded by cacophonous metal tubes. How, in the circumstances, can one lean backward in a pensive dream? Yours nostalgically,
BRIAN SIMPSON,
161 Gloucester Place, NW1.

§ Forward bargains are permitted on two previous da

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS NEWS

Personal investment and finance, pages 22 and 23

Stock markets

FT Ind 407.0 up 0.7
FT 64.49 up 1.18

Sterling

\$2.1590 up 1.35 cents
Index 69.4 up 0.5

Dollar

Index 86.9 down 0.3

Gold

\$390.5 an ounce up \$6.5

3-month money

Inter-bank 17 1/2 to 17 3/4
Euro \$ 15 1/2 to 15 3/4

IN BRIEF

American rates reach new peak of 15 1/2 pc

American interest rates rose to record levels yesterday, following a sharp rise in the prime rate to 15 1/2 per cent. Economists predicted that the rates will go still higher. Financial markets were jolted by a surge in the money supply, by mounting fears of a recession ahead and by the report that Iran would no longer accept dollars in payment for oil.

OECD deficit forecast

Member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) will show a \$30,500m (about £4,200m) current account deficit of payments deficit in 1980, after a \$29,000m deficit in 1979. This latest forecast, based on a revision of the 1979 figures, is a warning of the economic problems which the OECD states will show a \$5,000m surplus in 1980 after a \$4,500m deficit in 1979.

10m order for AEG

AEG-Telefunken AG of Frankfurt, has received a major order (about £10m) contract to deliver electrical equipment for three chemical factories being constructed by Lurgi Chemie und Mineralogische GmbH in China. This is the largest contract so far awarded to a West German electrical firm for the Chinese chemical industry.

ME interest problem

Exploration on how it might limit interest charges on some of its loans to member nations with balance of payments difficulties is being undertaken by the International Monetary Fund.

£400m credit to Greece

A £400m line of government credit, subject to price agreement, is being set up to cover Britain's supplying Greece with 700,000 coal-fired power stations and hardware for extensive railway modernisation.

Courtaulds closure

Courtaulds is to close its Red Star works in Preston and 2,600 workers will lose their jobs. The closure will mean that Courtaulds has stopped producing viscose filament yarn altogether.

Steel protest plans

Steel craftsmen's delegates from all over the country have voted for industrial action over the British Steel Corporation's closure policy. At a special meeting held at Sheffield, delegates agreed to action including an overtime ban, a one day strike and demonstrations at Westminster.

Belgian firms hard hit

A total of 266 Belgian companies shut down in the third quarter of 1979, throwing 6,737 people out of work, the National Employment Office has reported. Hardest hit was construction, metals, wood, and food.

US union chief quits

Mr Arnold Miller, United Mine Workers' ailing and controversial president, has agreed to step down and turn the union over to Mr Sam Church, the vice-president, a top UMW official said in Washington.

Chancellor gives warning of jobs at risk unless pay demands are modified

By David Blake

Economist's Editor

As new figures showed inflation rising and output falling in the economy, Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, last night launched an attempt to persuade unions to cut their wage demands this winter.

In a speech defending the Government's action this week in pushing interest rates to new record highs, Sir Geoffrey gave a warning that unless settlements during the coming months could "cripple employment and destroy jobs".

Sir Geoffrey backed up his warning with a tough restatement of the Government's determination to hold down the money supply and to limit public borrowing. But in one of the few glimpses of economic optimism this week, he seemed to suggest that determined action to hold down the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement might reduce the need for a prolonged period of high interest rates.

The Chancellor's call for pay restraint was made at a dinner of the Institute of Bankers. It came at the end of a day in which new figures for the Retail Price Index (RPI) showed that prices rose by 1 per cent in October, bringing the rate of inflation for the 12 months to October to 17.2 per cent.

The underlying rate of inflation over the previous six months, after excluding seasonal food, was far higher at 21 per cent.

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to pay for cuts in income tax.

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Bank base rates move up to 17 pc

By John Whitmore

The severity of the Government's squeeze on the personal borrower began to show yesterday with all the big banks raising their base lending rates to 17 per cent, and the building societies revealing that they intended to move rapidly to raise mortgage rates, possibly as high as 15 per cent.

A decision on mortgage rates will be announced next Thursday after an emergency meeting of the Council of the Building Societies Association. Mr Leonard Williams, chairman of the BSA, said yesterday that he had called the meeting after consulting with colleagues.

It had seemed clear to them from the Government's decision to improve the attractiveness of National Savings early next year that high interest rates could be with us for some time.

As a result, many societies felt that there was no point in waiting to raise their rates until the flow of money into the societies reduced to a trickle.

Indeed, it may well be that the societies will decide to raise the investment rate from December 1. In that case, additional increases in the mortgage rate, already due to rise from 11 1/2 to 12 1/2 per cent, would take effect from January 1, or as soon as contractually and administratively possible.

How high the societies will raise their rates remains to be seen, but the effect of the decision to raise the Bank of England's minimum lending rate to 17 per cent appears to be that the benchmark for retail deposits will settle at around 15 per cent.

The clearing banks yesterday raised their deposit rates to 15 per cent and the rate of interest being offered on National Savings investment accounts rises to the same level in the New Year.

The government will also be introducing a new National Savings certificate in February, offering a net rate of return of 10.32 per cent over a five year period, equivalent to 14 1/2 per cent gross to a basic rate taxpayer.

If the building societies decide that they must match a 15 per cent gross return, then the rate offered on share accounts will rise from the present 8.75 per cent to 10.5 per cent.

In turn, however, this will almost certainly involve a 15 per cent mortgage rate. That would raise monthly repayments on a £100,000 25 year mortgage from £104 to £129. A 14 per cent mortgage rate would raise the monthly repayment to £121.

Bank shares were better as National Westminster made its second base rate change this week, bringing it into line with the 17 per cent base rates. Southern Rhodesian bonds were again good on settlement hopes.

Dollar struggles after report of rejection for oil payments by Iran

By Caroline Ardison

The dollar plunged in hectic trading on the foreign exchange markets yesterday after reports that Iran was to stop accepting dollars in payment for its oil.

However, Ali Akbar Moftari, the Iranian Oil Minister, said that the Iranian Foreign Minister, who had earlier received no instructions to refuse dollars in payment for Iranian crude oil.

The dollar fell from 1.59 to 1.58 in the London market, after a sharp rise to 1.59 in the New York market.

The pound rose from 2.15 to 2.16 in the London market, after a sharp fall to 2.14 in the New York market.

The dollar's fall was attributed to the report that Iran was to stop accepting dollars in payment for its oil.

The pound's rise was attributed to the report that Iran was to stop accepting dollars in payment for its oil.

The dollar's fall was attributed to the report that Iran was to stop accepting dollars in payment for its oil

PERSONAL INVESTMENT AND FINANCE

Now is the time to review your strategy

Face to face with a fully armed and vicious credit squeeze it is a foolish man or woman who does not run for cover.

Before looking at the investment opportunities look at your liabilities—bank overdrafts, loans, credit card debts and mortgage: in short, all forms of borrowing. For now is the time to come to the aid of the Chancellor of Exchequer in his attempt to get money supply under control, if not for patriotic reasons for your own pocket's sake.

With minimum lending rate at a punitive 17 per cent and bank base rates following suit, overdraft interest is now over 20 per cent. You may think that you can shelter behind your credit card's interest rate of 25 per cent, but that, too, is likely to be short-lived. Higher interest rates are expected on Monday.

Despite the new and attractive rates of interest which are now being paid to savers, it is not the time to hold cash or short-term savings at the expense of repaying your debts. For even the best returns of 15-16 per cent fade into insignificance beside the cost of borrowed money.

You might argue that the money is being held on deposit in anticipation of a market upturn later. There are people now saying that they can hear the bell which rings at the bottom of the market: unfortunately, no one knows when the actual recovery will come. It could be soon or, as we believe, not until well into next year.

So remember that if you do borrow money to invest—which is in effect what you are doing if you prefer not to repay debt—while dealing expenses and stamp duty any investment you make will have to rise by about 27 per cent a year to put you at break-even point with your debt.

It is a demanding requirement to make of any share, particularly if the equity market remains in the cold for any length of time. Getting in and out after a quick, short rise would be a different matter, of course, and there

will be some exceptions to the equity doldrums.

The high yields now available on some first class industrial companies, which should be able to preserve their dividends in a recession, will underpin the equity market to some extent, but attention will be mainly focused on gilts and the wide range of fixed interest investments with their competing returns.

As the accompanying table shows, the choice for savers in search of high income has never been greater. There is a spread which embraces both long and short-term investment, and fixed interest investment with variable as well as fixed capital.

But, with inflation edging upwards to the 20 per cent mark, investors should remember that real returns on their money might not be so easy to achieve this coming year. Certainly, there is little in the table apart from the Retirement issue of National Savings Certificates linked to the Retail Price Index which is guaranteed to show a positive return.

This brings us back to gilts. Has the market begun to recover a little of its equilibrium after the long slithering two months of declining gilt prices? The corrective measures announced on Thursday by the Chancellor may have been greeted with outrage outside the markets and some scepticism inside, but as a short-term palliative at least, they appear to be doing the trick, and before the new tap was announced demand was strong for the new long-dated stock yielding 15½ per cent.

There is time enough in this market for both the small investor, who, when he returns should consider the much cheaper method of purchasing government stocks on the National Savings Stock Register over the post office counter, and the institutions.

Private investors often have perceptions and needs which are different from those of their institutional counterparts. They are either more cautious or, conversely, more willing

and able to take risks than the long-term managers of insurance and pension funds.

Tax and each individual's own tax bracket play an important part in his investment decisions, which cannot be isolated from his overall personal investment and financial requirements.

On these pages we are trying to cater for the complete financial man or woman, and provide him with an operating philosophy. The balance, for instance, has to be struck between securing financial protection for oneself and family and an investment programme aimed at securing financial independence.

First and foremost must come the protection afforded by life assurance, although the amount and extent of this protection will vary according to individual circumstances. So this will be a continuing feature of our family finance coverage.

On the other hand, the particular tax concessions which are attached to life assurance make it also a suitable medium for investment and there is little doubt that companies manipulating those concessions in ways never originally envisaged. While neutrality is broadly interpreted as a plea that all savings institutions should enjoy the same tax privileges—the battle cry of the institutional have-nots, we will remain neutral in a different way.

It is not the job of these pages, although it may be elsewhere in the paper, to take sides or pass judgement. The criterion remains: is it a good investment?

It is our job to identify the issues, questions and situations where investors, policyholders, taxpayers, mortgagors, savers and prospective pensioners need positive, practical advice. In addition, we are now able to deal with individual reader's queries on law, tax and insurance in the new Readers' Forum column.

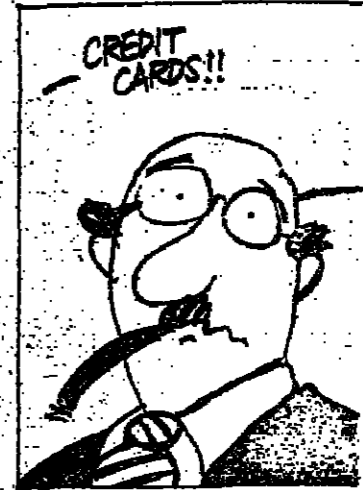
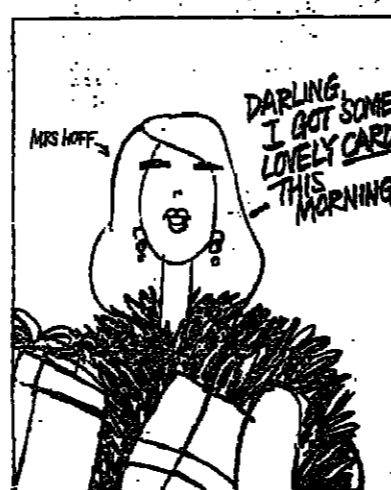
Margaret Stone

INTEREST RATES FOR SAVERS

	Stated Yield %	Equivalent Gross Yield at 25% %	30% %	45% %
Savings Certificates (18th issue)	8.45	11.27	12.07	15.36
Saving Certificates 19th issue 5 yrs (Feb. 1980)	10.23	13.77	14.75	18.78
British Savings Bonds 5 yrs	9.50	10.54	10.82	10.77
National Savings Bank—Ordinary A/c	5.00*	6.87*	7.14*	9.09
Trustee Savings Bank—Savings A/c	4.00	4.00†	4.00†	4.00†
National Savings Bank—Investment A/c	12.50	12.50	12.50	12.50
National Savings Bank Inv A/c Jan 1	15.00	15.00	15.00	15.00
Trustee Savings Bank—Special Deposit A/c	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25
Trustee Savings Bank—Term Deposits	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25
Finance House Deposits	14.86	14.86	14.86	14.86
Bank Deposits	15.00	15.00	15.00	15.00
Local Authorities—1-2 yrs	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00
Save-As-You-Earn (2nd issue)—5 years	8.80**	11.07	11.86	15.09
(3rd issue)—7 years	8.82**	11.49	12.31	15.67
Building Societies—Savings Shares	10.00***	13.33	14.29	14.29
—Shares	8.75***	11.67	12.50	12.50
—Term Shares—5 Years	10.75***	14.33	15.36	15.36
—Insurance linked—4 years	14.09	18.79	20.13	24.35
—Insurance linked—10 years	10.20	13.60	14.57	18.55
British Government Securities—5 years	15.25	15.25	15.25	15.25
—10 years	14.86	14.86	14.86	14.86
—over 10 years	15.13	15.13	15.13	15.13

NOTES: *Tax free on first £70 of interest only **Tax free; ***Tax paid at basic rate; † After 20 November.

HOFF of HEYBRIDGE HEATH



Double or quits

Going for a spin with Dunlop

Most new columns start with a greeting. This one is different. It starts with a warning that the title means what it says. The appeal is to those whose appetites are so jaded that only the thrill of losing and occasionally making money dangerously will enliven a dull day.

The unthinking will object that this is an odd time to begin a series of irresponsible share tips. Can I not see that the hue of the stockmarket is sickled over with the pale cast of recession?

Indeed I can; and that is why this is the ideal time to run a column that from time to time, certainly not from week to week, will concentrate on a twirl world of shares, convertibles and so on which lead lives all of their own.

So I shall try and avoid shares that simply move with the market—all blue chips and most second line stocks—which seem wise because I expect them to go down in the coming months rather than up.

And so to the game. Why not a flutter on Dunlop, our most famous tyre maker, second after Michelin in Europe though smaller of course than the American giants, Goodyear, Firestone, Uniroyal and Goodrich.

Tyres have slumped worldwide, Dunlop is barely profitable, and it has its debts. So the 50p shares are a poorly 44p and yield more than 17 per cent, indicating that the market thinks the dividend will be cut. The gamble is that it will not be, that investors will come to see this, and that in time the shares will eventually double.

Fairheads say that Dunlop is another Leyland; I disagree. At worst it is much better equipped than Leyland to sell profitable interests in plantations and sports goods, and raise enough money to swamp its present market capitalization.

On the brighter side, Dunlop's scope for making real money once tyre business turns up is huge. The latest interim report showed sales of £766m and pre-tax profits of £16m.

Peter Wainwright

Income bonds

Short-term bond bandwagon rolls

At the beginning of last month Skandia Life started the ball rolling in short-term guaranteed bonds by launching a two-year bond. Since then more offices have introduced either one or two-year bonds or both.

Business is booming. Not only are the bonds profitable for the companies, but they also offer very attractive returns for the investor. On one-year bonds he can have an annual yield of up to 15 per cent net of basic rate tax, with a little less on the two-year bonds. These rates are extremely attractive compared with other short-term homes for cash and are available by signing along the dotted line. Merchant investors point out that income on a £1,000 investment in its one-year bond would drop by £106 to £24 in the absence of tax relief, a non-starter in investment terms.

Many observers feel that the life companies offering these bonds have crossed the delicate line between "soft core" tax efficiency and "hard core" tax avoidance. The Life Office's Association disapproves of these plans on the basis that life assurance premium relief is designed for the longer term policyholder. Fears have been expressed that these plans will provoke the Revenue to tighten up the clawback rules in

der value equals the original investment, in this case £1,000, there is no liability to "clawback" the tax relief by the Revenue.

The mechanics on the two-year bonds are exactly the same: the investment is split to buy two single-premium policies, giving two years' income, while three annual premiums are paid.

As the tax relief accounts for much of the gain on these policies, companies emphasize that potential investors should consider carefully whether they are eligible for such relief before signing along the dotted line. Merchant investors point out that income on a £1,000 investment in its one-year bond would drop by £106 to £24 in the absence of tax relief, a non-starter in investment terms.

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Even if the Revenue allows the bonds to ride until the next Budget, companies will have to rethink their marketing strategy before the "cooling off" period on "qualifying"

general, which could have repercussions throughout the industry.

It is, of course, likely that the Revenue will call a halt to these short-term bonds in the next Budget, if not before. Even though they account for only a very small part of the life assurance market, the plans could easily mushroom and create widespread abuse of the tax relief concessions.

At present the only restraint on investors in these bonds is the level of premiums that are eligible for such relief. This amounts to a maximum of one sixth of total income, or £1,500, whichever is the greater.

It was ironically the Government that helped the life companies to give a simple marketing approach to these schemes by changing the method of allotting tax relief. Until April this year, the investor paid his premiums gross and claimed relief from the Revenue through his tax code. Now he simply pays the net premium, and the life office claims the relief.

Even if the Revenue allows the bonds to ride until the next Budget, companies will have to rethink their marketing strategy before the "cooling off" period on "qualifying"

life policies comes into effect at the beginning of the year. This gives the holder the opportunity to make such a policy penalty within a fortnight of taking it out.

As far as the life companies are concerned these bonds are only as a package. The life on the annual plan subsidises the income on the single premium. On its own the latter commercial concern. B January the investor cove the annual premi and hold on to the in- cluding single-premium so doing he would e earn the same amount come for half the ori- vestment in the case o year bond—getting a r some 25 per cent net rate tax at the expen life office.

Yields on these poli- of course, be sensitive reduction in the leve relief on premiums. Th- rate of 17½ per cent, basic rate tax of 30½ is proportionately hig- it has been in previo- So it is possible that t- be a cut in this rate in Budget. But the Gov- intends to give the li- ance industry a year's any change in this rat- reductions, announced not come into effect ur 1981.

One-year bondholder- as far as the yield money is concerned, story differs for those in two-year bonds. If a in the tax relief rai- nounced next year, the a reduced return on vestment from April,

Sally Mico

BOND YIELDS

Company	Minimum Investment	Yield p.a.	Frequency of Income payments
1 year bonds			
Albany Life	£500	15.0%	Half yearly
Liberty Life	£500	15.8%	At end of term
Merchant Investors	£1,000	15.0%	At end of term
Property Equity & Life	£1,000	15.0%	At end of term
2 year bonds			
Liberty Life	£500	14.8%	Annually
Merchant Investors	£1,000	12.5%	Annually
Skandia Life	£2,000	14.0%	Annually

* Net of basic rate tax

Action point

Some of my best friends, as the cliché goes, work for the Trustee Savings Banks, but that does not alter my opinion that some 7½ million of their savings accounts customers should consider closing these accounts, which have a collective worth of £1,500m.

At midnight on Tuesday those savers lose the right to a tax-free interest of up to £70 a year. In future, the 4 per cent interest payable on their accounts will be subject to income tax at the individual's own tax rate.

The actual amount held by individual savings accounts customers is not large. The average holding is £198, and the TSB

argues that such customers are not particularly concerned about the interest earned on the accounts, but are happy to keep them alive for reasons which are a combination of nostalgia and the convenience of a savings passbook, where each transaction is immediately recorded.

The nostalgia argument is unanswerable; either it influences an account holder or it does not. But I would dispute the contention that people are not greatly concerned about modest interest payments. Look at the importance with which the pensioners' £10 Christmas bonus is viewed.

Why should anyone suffer a voluntary

cutback in interest, however small amount of interest on that £198 savings account this year is £7 year it will be (for basic rate t. £5.54. Yet if the same person t- the holding to the state National Bank, who also uses a passbook many more branches into the ba- interest would rise to £9.90.

The incidence of taxation w- a specific problem for parents children with TSB savings accou- interest of over £15 a year is to the Inland Revenue and, in th- children, will be aggregated wit- their parents.

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OFFICES ALSO IN BRISTOL AND GLASGOW

Grouse

Where a maintenance order is made out to, rather than for the support of children, it is counted as their, rather than the mother's income, with a resulting lowering of the overall tax burden. Children can be given income up to the level of their own personal tax allowance before it becomes taxable.

The Department of Health and Social Security, on the other hand, has recently sent out instructions that maintenance payments to children be counted as a woman's income, when assessing its own contribution to family support.

It claims that a "loop-hole" in the law was being exploited by divorcing couples, who agreed that substantial sums of maintenance would be paid to

children, with nothing for the wife who could then claim social security to boost her income.

But there are plenty of instances where it is not a loophole. A former wife who has remarried, for instance, and has no claim on her first husband, may still be receiving maintenance for, or rather to, his dependent children. If her second husband leaves her without funds she may apply to the DHSS for herself, and any subsequent children.

She will find that maintenance paid for the children of her first marriage is used to reduce the total amount to which she is entitled. The first husband ends up supporting his remarried former wife—a situation which no court in the land has the power to order.

Is one within one's legal rights in refusing to give the name of one's insurance company to the other party's insurers, and then threatening to take them to court unless they settle the bill direct with oneself? If not, is there some form of words which one can use in communicating with one's own insurance company to prevent (or at least deter) them from entering into a knock-knock arrangement? (WB, Kent)

There is nothing to compel you to disclose the name of your motor insurers to anybody else, unless there has been personal injury. You should, however, tell your own insurers of an accident, even though you hope it will not be necessary to claim; you can say you hope to make a recovery from the other motorist.

Is it legally permitted to reserve a parking space? Trying to park in the West End I was confronted by a man who blocked my way as I was about to enter a meter bay. Waving his umbrella he refused to move, saying he was reserving the space for his wife who was driving round the block. I drove off in annoyance, but would I have been justified in easing forward and edging him out of the way? (MJJ, London)

No, he cannot reserve a parking space. By blocking your path and refusing to move when asked, the man was himself committing the offence of obstruction by "wilfully obstructing the free passage along the highway". This is unlawful unless he has lawful authority or excuse. Had you called a police officer he could have been arrested, had he refused to go. You might have asked his name and address and threatened to report him.

Although you would in theory be entitled to use reasonable means to "abate the nuisance" caused by his wilful obstruction, bull-dozing him aside might not be viewed kindly by a court, particularly if he were hurt. For example, he might accuse you of assault or even dangerous driving.

A self-employed friend who works from home had agreed a fixed proportion of his home costs as a deductible business expense for income tax pur-

Disclosing names • Parking • Capital gains and houses

This specialist readers service has been compiled with the help of John Drummond, Vera Di Palma and Ronald Irving.

Readers' Forum

poses. He subsequently sold the house some time ago and recently received a capital gains tax assessment based on a similar proportion of the gain. The tax involved was some £300. Could not a claim be resisted under the £1,000 exemption rule? (KCB, Bristol)

As you mention, the sale took place "some time ago". What matters here is the timing of the sale. The exemption limit of £1,000 for the tax years 1975-76 and 1976-77 referred to the sale proceeds, not the amount of the gain, so if the sale took place during this period the gain would not escape tax. However, the rules were considerably relaxed from April 6, 1977 onwards: the £1,000 exemption limit referring to the amount of the gain itself. If, therefore, the sale took place after April 5, 1977, the gain of £300 would escape tax provided the total gains for the tax year did not exceed £1,000.

Incidentally, if your friend had invested the proceeds of the sale in another house from which he worked it is possible that "rollover relief" could be claimed.

I invested £2,000 in a commodity syndicate in 1975. I traded in futures and the intention was that they would make a capital gain for me. (no income was paid). I made a capital gain and have now had a claim from the Inland Revenue under Schedule D and the Inland Revenue are

arguing over whether it should be Case I or Case VI, on the grounds that futures are not investments in the true sense as they do not yield income.

As I had capital losses to set off against the gain, but no trading losses, it is a matter of some interest to me that it should if possible be assessed as a capital gain and not a trading profit. (G.A., Worthing)

Unfortunately there is nothing in the taxing Acts to counter the Inland Revenue's view that the gain is of an income nature, rather than capital. In litigation in the courts has tended to support the taxman's approach. For example, in considering whether a transaction is or is not a trade, two important guidelines were laid down in CIR v Fraser which required the answer to two questions: does the object purchased give the buyer aesthetic enjoyment (such as a work of art) or does it give potential income (such as investment in land or buildings) while he continues to hold it? If the answer to both questions is in the negative then a purchase and sale appears *prima facie* to be in the nature of trade. All you can do is to press to be assessed under Case I (as earned income) rather than Case VI (unearned income).

Do you know of any companies which will issue a term assurance policy to a retired civil servant (in excellent health) who has just reached the age of 70 with a sum in-

sured of, say £10,000-£15,000? I have had term assurance with Commercial Union for the past 10 years, but they now inform me that the minimum sum has been raised to £25,000, the annual premiums for which would be £556.50 for a three-year term and £643.40 for a five-year term. This is a real gas beyond my own needs and pocket! I simply need to provide some additional money for my wife in the event of my predeceasing her. Her insurance would be to use most of it to purchase an immediate annuity. (CB, Guisley)

Among the commission paying offices, Phoenix charges £546 a year for a £12,000 policy for five years, or £713.28 a year for 10 years. Among the non-commission paying offices, the London Life Association is quoting £425.44 a year for £12,000 (Skandia Life policy for five years, or £575.20 for 10 years). The drawback to term assurance is that you could survive to the end of the term and have paid quite a lot of premium—when it would be very expensive to arrange further cover. Instead, therefore, it could be a good plan to take a whole-life policy—which will cover you until death. The two insurers mentioned above quote £874.80 and £808 per annum, respectively. While term assurance offers no return if you do not claim, should you wish to surrender you, probably it would be possible to surrender a whole life policy for cash.

I was recently interested in buying a vintage car and was willing to pay the price asked on the understanding that the seller would undertake to meet the cost of certain repairs. He later wrote to me agreeing to my request but his letter was headed "without prejudice". What is the exact legal significance of these words? (REB, Woking)

In a nutshell "without prejudice" means that the offeror makes his offer without admission of liability. As used by the seller in the context of his letter the expression has no legal significance. The expression applies only where someone makes a claim which is disputed.

FINANCIAL NEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

GEC fires
further
roadside
it Avey's

Rosemary Unsworth
GEC, which increased its 5p offer for Avey's to 26p this week, has attacked the rising share price of the group's offits and dividend forecast. It confirmed the attractiveness of the bid in a falling market.

In a letter to shareholders and Nelson of Stafford, GEC chairman, questions whether the group's forecast of a 10p dividend is realistic. It also criticizes Avey's decision to increase the dividend by 5p per share to 15p, and adds that borrowings appear to have already doubled in 1979 even before the proposed dividend is paid.

Briefly

P. KENT
Chairman told shareholders that the group's forecast of a 10p dividend is realistic. It also criticizes Avey's decision to increase the dividend by 5p per share to 15p, and adds that borrowings appear to have already doubled in 1979 even before the proposed dividend is paid.

M. Y. DART
Over 2.2m new ordinary shares (4.8 per cent) provisionally offered under rights issue have been taken up.

INREDA
Production is now recovering rapidly, reports Mr. Kent, chairman, but results in the first half of year are bound to be disappointing.

RETAIL PRICES

The following are the index numbers (January 1974=100) of retail prices not seasonally adjusted, released by the Department of Employment yesterday.

	(1) All items	(2) Items excluding seasonal foods	(3) Annual rate of increase (12) over seasonally adjusted
978	201.1	202.4	8.4
979	202.5	203.8	8.0
980	204.2	205.1	8.2
979	207.2	207.3	8.7
980	208.9	209.1	8.9
981	210.6	210.6	9.3
982	214.2	214.0	11.8
983	215.9	215.9	13.8
984	219.1	219.4	15.6
985	229.1	230.1	22.3
986	230.9	232.1	22.1
987	233.2	234.6	22.1
988	235.6	237.0	21.0

Gross Domestic Product at constant factor cost 1975=100

	Based on output data	Seasonally adjusted
1973	103.8	
1974	101.9	
1975	100.0	
1976	102.2	
1977	104.8	
1978	107.8	
1979 1st Qtr	101.2	
2nd Qtr	99.8	
3rd Qtr	99.2	
4th Qtr	98.8	
1976 1st Qtr	101.4	
2nd Qtr	101.8	
3rd Qtr	102.0	
4th Qtr	104.0	
1977 1st Qtr	104.8	
2nd Qtr	104.3	
3rd Qtr	104.1	
4th Qtr	103.3	
1978 1st Qtr	105.9	
2nd Qtr	108.0	
3rd Qtr	108.7	
4th Qtr	108.7	
1979 1st Qtr	108.1	
2nd Qtr	111.2	
3rd Qtr	108.9	

Preliminary estimate

Bank Base Rates

Bank	Rate
ABN Bank	17%
Barclays Bank	17%
BCCI Bank	17%
Consolidated Crdts	17%
C. Hoare & Co.	17%
Lloyds Bank	17%
London Mercantile	14%
Midland Bank	17%
Nat Westminster	15%
Royal Bank	17%
TSB	17%
Williams and Glyn's	17%

* 7 day deposit on sums of £10,000 and under 15% up to £25,000 15.5% over £25,000 15.5%

M. J. H. Nightingale & Co. Limited

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The Over the Counter Market

1979 To	Company	Price	Change	Div	P/E
99	39 Airsprung Group	81	-1	6.7	8.4
100	35 Armistage & Rhodes	43	-3	8.8	4.7
101	143 Bardon Hill	221	-13.5	6.2	6.5
102	50 Deborah Ord	93	-5.0	5.4	10.2
93	93 Deborah New-Ord	93	-	-	-
353	140 Deborah 171 CULS	353	+1	17.5	5.0
147	140 Frederick Parker	108	+1	16.5	12.0
158	10 George Blair	110	-1	5.2	9.0
43	97 James-Burroughs	118	-2	7.2	10.4
232	250 Robert Jenkins	250	-31.3	12.5	9.9
232	150 Torday Limited	230	-2	14.3	6.0
34	14 Twinklford Ord	22	-1	0.8	3.8
32	69 Twinklford 12 CULS	74	-1	1.0	4.8
55	23 Twinklford Holdings	81	-1	2.4	5.4
94	42 Water Alexander	184	-2	4.1	6.3
136	136 W. S. Yeates	187	-2	-	-
189	187 W. S. Yeates New	187	-2	-	-

* Accounts prepared under provision of S.S.A.P.15

Wall Street

New York, Nov. 16.—Stocks fell sharply this morning in active trading following a rise in the prime rate to 15 1/2 per cent from 15 per cent by Citibank.

Citibank's action came after news late on Thursday that the basic money stock surged \$5,000m in the latest reporting week. The surprise jump in the money stock was the blow to market hopes.

The Dow Jones industrial average lost six points and declined 1 1/2 points to 2,146. Volume leader IBM slipped 1 1/2 to 61 1/2. Ford Motor 1/4 to 35 1/2 and UAL Inc one to 20 1/2.

On Thursday the market ended the day higher, although part of its mid-session gains were surrendered by a close. Advancing issues held a lead over decliners of about \$20 to about \$30.

The Dow Jones industrial average was up 1/8 at \$21,333. Volume increased to 32,380,000 shares from Wednesday's New York stock exchange total of 30,970,000.

The market moved steadily higher most of the day until heavy action appeared in advance of the Federal Reserve money figures.

Busy silver buying

SILVER futures closed 18 cents above their low on Thursday. Silver buyers encouraged by sustained buying in the futures market, silver prices rose to a high of 17.15 cents per ounce.

Gold prices were steady. The price of gold was 170.00 per ounce. Silver prices were 17.15 per ounce.

COPPER

COPPER futures were generally steady. The price of copper was 1.10 per pound.

COTTON

COTTON futures were generally steady. The price of cotton was 1.10 per pound.

WHEAT

WHEAT futures were generally steady. The price of wheat was 1.10 per bushel.

RICE

RICE futures were generally steady. The price of rice was 1.10 per bushel.

SUGAR

SUGAR futures were generally steady. The price of sugar was 1.10 per pound.

COFFEE

COFFEE futures were generally steady. The price of coffee was 1.10 per pound.

TEA

TEA futures were generally steady. The price of tea was 1.10 per pound.

Cocoa

Cocoa futures were generally steady. The price of cocoa was 1.10 per pound.

Rubber

Rubber futures were generally steady. The price of rubber was 1.10 per pound.

Hides

Hides futures were generally steady. The price of hides was 1.10 per pound.

Wool

Wool futures were generally steady. The price of wool was 1.10 per pound.

Grain

Grain futures were generally steady. The price of grain was 1.10 per bushel.

Lumber

Lumber futures were generally steady. The price of lumber was 1.10 per board foot.

Timber

Timber futures were generally steady. The price of timber was 1.10 per board foot.

Paper

Paper futures were generally steady. The price of paper was 1.10 per pound.

Glass

Glass futures were generally steady. The price of glass was 1.10 per pound.

Cement

Cement futures were generally steady. The price of cement was 1.10 per pound.

Brick

Brick futures were generally steady. The price of brick was 1.10 per pound.

Steel

Steel futures were generally steady. The price of steel was 1.10 per pound.

Aluminum

Aluminum futures were generally steady. The price of aluminum was 1.10 per pound.

Zinc

Zinc futures were generally steady. The price of zinc was 1.10 per pound.

Nickel

Nickel futures were generally steady. The price of nickel was 1.10 per pound.

Copper

Copper futures were generally steady. The price of copper was 1.10 per pound.

Silver

Silver futures were generally steady. The price of silver was 1.10 per ounce.

Gold

Gold futures were generally steady. The price of gold was 1.10 per ounce.

Platinum

Platinum futures were generally steady. The price of platinum was 1.10 per ounce.

Palladium

Palladium futures were generally steady. The price of palladium was 1.10 per ounce.

Rhodium

Rhodium futures were generally steady. The price of rhodium was 1.10 per ounce.

Iridium

Iridium futures were generally steady. The price of iridium was 1.10 per ounce.

Osmium

Osmium futures were generally steady. The price of osmium was 1.10 per ounce.

Ruthenium

Ruthenium futures were generally steady. The price of ruthenium was 1.10 per ounce.

Cadmium

Cadmium futures were generally steady. The price of cadmium was 1.10 per ounce.

Mercury

Mercury futures were generally steady. The price of mercury was 1.10 per ounce.

Bismuth

Bismuth futures were generally steady. The price of bismuth was 1.10 per ounce.

Antimony

Antimony futures were generally steady. The price of antimony was 1.10 per ounce.

Tin

Tin futures were generally steady. The price of tin was 1.10 per ounce.

Lead

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